
THE
PHILOSOPHY
OF
ANCIENT GREECE.



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THE
PHILOSOPHY
OF
ANCIENT GREECE
INVESTIGATED,
IN ITS
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS,
TO THE
ÆRAS OF ITS GREATEST CELEBRITY,
IN THE
IONIAN, ITALIC, AND ATHENIAN SCHOOLS:

WITH REMARKS ON THE
DELINEATED SYSTEMS OF THEIR FOUNDERS;

AND
SOME ACCOUNTS OF THEIR LIVES AND CHARACTERS, AND THOSE OF
THEIR MOST EMINENT DISCIPLES.

By WALTER ANDERSON, D.D.

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1791.

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PHILIPSON

ANCIENT

INSTRUMENT

ORIGINAL

OFFICE OF THE

RECORDS



E R R A T A.

Page 9. Line 17. *for* Elogy, *read* Elegy

- 28. 10. *for* Thomafinus, *read* Thomafius
- 31. in the note, *for* Chio, *read* Chilo
- 41. 7. *for* Lampacus, *read* Lampfacus
- 101. 15. *for* department, *read* deportment
- 142. 15. *for* Æschyles, *read* Æschylus
- 150. 31. *for* Phroutifterion, *read* Phrontifterion
- 198. 21. and in feveral other places, *for* dialect *read* dialectic
- 203. 14. in the Greek word, omit the firft omicron
- 254. 14. *for* illufions, *read* allufions
- 282. in the note, l. 5, *for* his, *read* the Deity's, and *for* his, l. 8. *read* the circuit of his
- 337. 31. the upfilon in the laft Greek word to be changed into a figma
- 383. 28. *for* rule, *read* rules
- 384. 16. *for* mared, *read* marked
- 440. 12. *for* began, *read* begun
- 441. 1. *read* in a book
- 449. 5. *disjoin* common *from* ability
- 443. 6. in the Latin note, *for* voluntas, *read* voluptas
- 516. 12. *for* difciples, *read* condifciples
- 581. 26. *for* latter, *read* later
- 582. 26. *for* prefume, *read* prefumes
- 181. ult. The word *Pannal*, a Scotch law term, is ufed, the meaning of it being obvious from the context. The Englifh epithet *Culprit*, to which it is equivalent, is alfo a technical one, but too finical and vulgarifed, to be applied to Socrates, arraigned before his Judges.

E. R. A. T. A.

1	1. The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
2	2. The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
3	3. The third part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
4	4. The fourth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
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11	11. The eleventh part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
12	12. The twelfth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
13	13. The thirteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
14	14. The fourteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
15	15. The fifteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
16	16. The sixteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
17	17. The seventeenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
18	18. The eighteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
19	19. The nineteenth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.
20	20. The twentieth part of the book is devoted to a detailed account of the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day.

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P R E F A C E.

THE subject of the following sheets has been treated, either in whole or in part, by the learned in almost every country of Europe. As curious in itself, and admitted to be a requisite branch of literary education, it has employed the pens of several English authors of the last and present century; while none of them, excepting Mr Stanley, have wrote professedly upon the subject, and so much at large, as some foreign authors have done. We have, indeed, several valuable tracts upon it, such as the learned Cudworth has given, and other detached pieces, or compends, of the Philosophy of the Ancient Grecian Schools. But, as these productions, whatever their merit be, are scattered in sundry books, some of them more, and some less known to the Public, there appeared still to be wanting a Work, containing an entire and connected view of the copious subject; without excluding from it, as Mr Stanley has done, the birth of the Grecian Philosophy, in the ages of the earliest Poets.

Poets. From the neglect or suppression of this part of the subject, the entrance to it, beside being abrupt, is deficient in a curious and instructive point of information, respecting the first and early traces of Literature and Philosophy, amongst a people so distinguished as the Greeks became, by their gradual progress, and signal advancement in both.

By this remark, the Author of the subsequent Publication would not be understood to derogate from the just reputation which Mr Stanley's work has obtained, at home and abroad. Criticism of it, by an English writer upon the same subject, must appear partial, or invidious. To his extensive researches into ancient authors, and his proper selection of them, as vouchers, every such writer must, in some measure, be obliged; and the Author of the present performance readily acknowledges instruction, in several points of difficulty, received from them: Yet, here, he must be allowed to observe in what respect his work varies much from that of Mr Stanley. In the scheme of it, place is given to remarks upon the reasoning employed by the most eminent of the Grecian Philosophers, in support of their *physical, theological, and moral* systems. A fuller, and more connected display of their theories and arguments, is also studied. The frigidity of their bare details is, often, relieved by the interspersed observations. Where the principles or tenets are of impious, or immoral tendency, they undergo more particular discussions. The propriety of subjoining such confutations of their specious, but futile arguments, has been attended to by
most

most of the *foreign* compilers of the Grecian Philosophy; but in Mr Stanley's performance, no caution of this kind is used. The omission of it, when considered, appears an unsuitable, and faulty one; and what, in respect of the impressions which fallacious arguments may make on the minds of novices in philosophical reasoning, was not to be repeated, but corrected, in the present Publication.

But with what ability, extent of knowledge, and taste in literary study, the following work is executed, the competent judges of that *erudition*, of which it presents a *copy* at large, may, on a candid perusal, decide. Yet, whatever that judgment be, the Author considers the acknowledgment of his aim, and endeavours, in the performance, to support and illustrate the just principles of Theology and Morals, in opposition to their contraries, to be of such peculiar importance, that any separate approbation it may be allowed to have, cannot be deemed of equal value, in itself, or be alike respected by the Public.

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THE
PHILOSOPHY
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PART I.

SECTION I.

PHILOSOPHY, in a general and loose acceptation of the word, may be said to be coeval with any considerable exertions of the faculties of reason and judgment among mankind. In this conception of it, the most superficial observations upon natural objects, or the simplest reflections upon actions and events, may be regarded as the first buds of science in the human mind. But if, by that term we understand such a measure of rational study and investigation, as may be productive of scientific knowledge, either in things natural, moral, or divine, the birth of philosophy cannot be reckoned to coincide with the rude ages of the world, or the earliest periods of political society. To mature human reason itself, a certain extent of experiences,
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and a reiteration of them, are necessary; and this foundation of real knowledge cannot well be laid but by the settled intercourse of men, and their holding conversations together, for confirming the truth of their experiences, and the enlargement of them. Philosophy, therefore, taken in a proper sense, may be concluded to have had its origin in the more social and civilized conditions of mankind; and, in judging of the pretensions of nations to acquaintance with the common arts of life, or any of the speculative sciences, in priority of time to others, it may be presumed, in general, that the claim of those amongst them ought to be preferred, whose political establishments had precedence, and whose governments were so fixed, as to afford room and encouragement to inventions and discoveries, either useful to the community, or entertaining to the minds of men, when they enjoyed from it protection and tranquillity.

In Lucian's fiction of the circuit made through the nations by Philosophy personified *, her report is to the following purpose. ' I did not, ' immediately, address myself to the Greeks, but passed them over, ' knowing how tractable they would be to my yoke. My first course ' was to the barbarous nations, and especially to the Indians, the most ' numerous tribe of men upon earth. They descended from their elephants to embrace me; and their brachmans and gymnosophists still ' live in the knowledge and practice of my discipline. I turned next to ' the Ethiopians, and from them to the Egyptians, whose prophets and ' priests became my élèves in theological knowledge, and the worship ' of the gods. I then visited Babylon, and gave her Chaldaeans and ' Magi similar instruction. My subsequent progress was through Scythia into Thrace; from whence I sent before me into Greece, Eumolpus and Orpheus, the one informed in all the rites of religion, and ' the other conversant in the powers of music. I quickly followed them ' in person; but the fancies of the Greeks were otherwise engaged; ' and although they did not repel, yet they admitted not altogether my ' embraces. But the conferences I held with them, in process of time, ' produced those eminent men called the *Sages*, so generally known and ' admired

* In Dialog. de Fugitivis.

'admired in the world.' Here it is, with reason, suggested, that philosophy's first resort was to the eastern region of the earth; which, as it is known to have been the earliest and greatest nursery of men, so it has been justly accounted and called the CRADLE of human wisdom. The inferiority of the Greeks, also, in point of antiquity, to the other nations that are mentioned, and their long engagement in studies in little or no correspondence with philosophy, were so known and confessed, that Lucian, with all his licence in fiction, presumed not, even in his delivery of a fable, to dissemble the truth.

Whatever energy we may ascribe to natural genius, whatever influence to the benignity of climate, for the production of the ingenious arts, their rise must be retarded in any nation, whose attention to them is diverted by occupations of more important concern. When Greece was embroiled in the manner described by Thucydides *, when neither families nor individuals could, with any safety, lay aside their arms;

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when

* The inspection of that author's preliminary pages abundantly proves how far removed from a civilized state those vagrant tribes were, which first occupied the Peloponnesus and Ionia. Their settlements, says he, were, from necessity, removed at a distance from the sea-coasts; then constantly exposed to piratical incursions. Migrations from one district to another being frequent, and, in consequence of them, mutual assaults often ensuing, every tribe was obliged to be prepared, and in warlike array for such encounters. In this turbulent condition, the continental region, afterwards known by the name of Greece, and the islands of the Cyclades, remained until near Theseus's time; when Minos, King of Crete, reduced the latter, and planted new colonies in several of them. Still, however, the people called Greeks were not to be distinguished from other navigators of the sea, called Barbarians, which both were equally known to the Cretans and Egyptians, to turn the commerce of the sea, although then more opened, to piracy, and plundering upon strangers, and likewise on one another. These outrages were more or less continued, until the Argonautic expedition, and the subsequent war of Troy. From the ten years prolongation of it, from the destruction of many chiefs, and the late return of others to their countries, seditions arose, and mutual expulsions again took place in many cities. Eighty years elapsed before Greece emerged from such domestic confusions, and a more peaceful respite than ever she had known, was attained by the Heraclidae, together with the Dorians, getting quiet possession of the Peloponnesus; for some generations. Thucid. Hist. fol. edit. lib. 1.

when the only hero was he, whose bodily vigour, joined with dexterity in combat, enabled him to overcome brutal force, whether in the shape of the wild beast of the forest, or of the more savage man in his den; is it surprising that proper attention was not paid to the formation of the Greek alphabet, and that a great deficiency * in it was supplied by Cadmus's communication of his Phoenician letters? From their being first used by the Pelasgians, they came to be denominated from that Grecian tribe; although it was known that Cadmus, who founded Thebes, had taught the orthography and qualified pronounciation of them. The slow progress of the Greeks in other arts may also be referred to the same causes. Their famous ship, the *Argo*, fitted out for Jason's expedition to Colchos, was not only the first they had built of that large dimension, but of the oblong and bent construction, most proper for navigation; while the Phoenicians and Cretans, adjacent to the Grecian islands, had, for a considerable time before, whole fleets of such vessels, with which they kept the dominion of the seas.

If then, in the first view to be taken of the Grecian genius, it may appear to be feeble, and more addicted to the excursions of the imagination, than to the stricter researches of the mind after knowledge, it is yet evident that this may be accounted for, in a great measure, from peculiar circumstances. An allowance, indeed, may well be made for the accidental retardment of philosophic improvement for some time in Greece, when it will be evinced that her genius, at length introduced into the paths of science, became inventive, and signally progressive in them all; to such a degree as renders it credible that if, being of later civilization than other nations, the Greeks were not originals in several discoveries, they would have been such in other circumstances, as well as they were improvers, in every branch of human knowledge.

In considering to what divisions our proposed subject may be reduced, in such a manner as to mark the progress of the Grecian philosophy, by certain aeras or noted periods, the following general sketch of them may be admitted. The *first* is, that which may be called the fabulous or poetic age; in which the theology of the Greeks, constituting almost the whole of their philosophy, was chiefly supported upon traditional fables,

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. 3. fol. edit. p. 201.; Pausanias Beoticis, lib. 9. p. 560.

fables, and the fictions of the poets. The *second*, that in which philosophy came to be so far separated from theology and religion, as to be known, and the study of it followed as a distinct profession; and those who applied themselves to it were called *wise men*. The *third*, that in which schools of philosophy took place*, and subsequent masters in them trained up disciples, but produced no sects. The *fourth*, in which philosophical studies were cultivated in a greater extension of their subjects, and more method was observed in the treatment of them. The *fifth*, in which the proper divisions of philosophy being made, all its different branches were taught in the academies of Athens; which in their successions were distinguished, either by some general names, or such particular ones, as were appropriated to those called their *founders*; who, by the signal exhibition of their geniuses, not only engaged numerous disciples and admirers of their philosophical systems, but such adherents to them, as if in each of them had been included the utmost reach of human ingenuity and wisdom; and hence were produced those permanent sects, whose principles and tenets, although at variance, were for ages celebrated and admired in the world.—We begin then with the first of these periods, but propose not to enlarge on it so fully as its reference to the ancient mythology may be thought to require; since it forms rather an introductory than a constituent part of our general subject. There is, however, to be found in it a measure of instruction and of literary intertainment, that merits attention, and a suitable display.

That there were anciently in Greece, and in various other countries, men of some genius, under the name of poets or bards, who taught what may be called a *mythological philosophy*, cannot be doubted. Their studies being turned to subjects the most interesting to mankind, the fruit of them was delivered under ingenious or agreeable fables, in measured sentences, or verse. The primitive language of almost all nations appears to have been, in their studied or set discourses, that, which, along with harmonious sound, gave a dignified accent and cadence to the voice and expressions. Hence it obtained in the sacred hymns, and supplications to the gods, and in all the announced ceremonies of religion †.

Even

* There is here an exception to be made with respect to the Pythagorean sect.

† Strabo, fol. edit. Zylandi, lib. 15.

Even after writing in prose was introduced among the Greeks by Cadmus, Pherecydes Syrus, and others, versification still kept its place, for a long time, in all written laws, and was not departed from in important and premeditated orations. The poets, therefore, were the first public orators ; and their compositions were looked upon as the effect of some supernatural inspiration ; especially when they communicated certain theories respecting the origin of the world, or the first principles of all things, and that not in the dry didactic stile of philosophers, but in one having such embellishments of fancy and fable as were suited to please and captivate the imaginations of men, little conversant in study, or mature reflection.

The *mythologies* being thus the vehicles of religious and moral instruction, most adapted to the conceptions of the people, and relished by them, the poets produced them in abundance. When the fertility of their own inventions failed, they had recourse to those of others *. Beside what the Greeks themselves composed, says Phurnutus, many of the mythologies were borrowed from the Magi of Persia, the Egyptians, the Africans, and the Celtae. What may be called the philosophic principle or doctrine contained in these would be often liable to misinterpretation ; but the turning of it, along with the fable, in the shape that best corresponded to the taste of the people to whom it was addressed, would be sufficient to recommend it. The presumption, therefore, is, that the theological or philosophic poets of the early ages, without much considering the rationality or consistency of their *theogonies*, (which were equivalent to accounts of the generation of the world), admitted them generally upon trust, and engrossed them into their poems, as common tradition at home reported them, or their conversation with foreigners might enable them to make additions that either embellished, or aggrandized their subjects.

In the primary stages of civil society, nations following one another at distances, in the invention of the useful arts, or in improvements of their political governments, often had reciprocal obligations for counsel
and

* In Opusculis Philosophicis, Phurnutus de Natura Deorum, Oct. Edit. p. 171.

and instruction upon these subjects. The practice was laudable, and followed more generally, perhaps, than is commonly supposed, or, in the elapse of time, could afterwards be traced. We are well assured *, that the Spartan laws were, by Lycurgus, copied from those of Minos; and that Solon, in reforming the Athenian commonwealth, had recourse to Crete and Egypt for more distinct information in policy. The custom, indeed, of sending embassies from one state to another, upon occasions of legislation, is so frequently mentioned in history, as to need no particular proof. But if, with respect to laws, such communications obtained, we may well imagine, that in religion they would likewise prevail. Religion, yet more congenial to human minds than any tie of political government, and which places nations and individuals upon the same footing of dependency on a superior power, would every where appear to be that affection in which mankind most sympathized, and could, in different nations, include nothing in its injunctions, or ceremonies, but what was of amicable tendency to them all. Polytheism, indeed, naturally generated superstition, and superstition inhumane rites of religion; but, if history is to be credited, these hideous notions and practices made no part of its primitive appearances, but originated and grew up as polytheism grew and increased. Even under this disguise, it was still regarded as the distinguishing mark between savage and civilized nations †. When Ulysses is thrown upon an unknown island, and desires to discover whether its inhabitants were humane or barbarous, he rests his assurance, with respect to this point, upon their having or not having amongst them signs of religion, and the worship of the gods. The monster Polyphemus is only found to be the horrid blasphemer of both.

We need not then inquire, whether, as Diodorus Siculus ‡ affirms, the Egyptian Sesostris, along with his conquests, spread colonies of the gods of his country over the east, or what share of them Danaus and Orpheus are said to have imported into Greece. They were a common stock, in which all nations had a concern. It is presumable, from the antiquity of their monarchy, that the Egyptians were, as Lucian || reck-

ons

* Plato, in Minoe. Hom. Odyss. lib. 19.

† Odyss. lib. 9.

‡ Bibliothec. lib. 1.

|| De dea Syria.

ons them, the first who made the worship and service of the gods their particular study, and who, understanding sacred names, taught to other nations the language to be used in the solemnities of religion. From the early use they made of symbols and hieroglyphic characters, for concealing from the vulgar, and reserving to the priestly order, and to their kings, all their acquired knowledge either in theology, physics, or other sciences, we may surely infer, that *mythologies* were much studied, and abounded amongst them. We know what a laboured and intricate piece of philosophy and mythology blended together, Plutarch, judicious and critical * as he is, thought fit to write upon the subject of the two ungenerated and primary Egyptian deities, *Osiris* and *Isis*; names, in the Egyptian language, given to the sun and moon; and which, according to the physiology of the learned priests, conjoining their essential qualities of heat and humidity, and producing the temperature of air and water, supported the universe. It was also part of their system, that the deities called celestial, although ancient, and the objects of human worship, were yet no more than the productions of the *Nile*, or *Ocean*, which was the original name of that famous river. These divinities, in the first ages, were reckoned to have assumed not only human forms, but those of sacred animals, and to have traversed the world, and observed the actions of men. Here, then, we have a most probable original of what the Greeks called *theogonies*, exhibiting, according to the gross imaginations of their poets, lineal generations of their fabulous gods, and having a reference, which was but obscurely or cursorily signified by them, to the generation of the world. To this we have only to add, that no poet is so remarkable as Homer, who travelled into Egypt, for adopting into his poetic machinery, that fiction which corresponded to the Egyptian mythology, and represented the gods as rendering themselves visible to mortals, and holding frequent conferences with them †; and that Father Oceanus, and Mother Tethys, or Earth, being the generators of all things, is a verse, with him, in favourite currency.

Upon mentioning this great poet, we cannot avoid remarking the unfavourable circumstances in which the Grecian bards or mythologists were

* De Iside et Osiride. Diod. Sicul. ibid. p. 17.

† Iliad, lib. 14.

were placed. With little help from such traditional information as was to be met with in other more ancient nations, without having any resort to public institutions for literature, obliged often to divide their attention betwixt study, and the means of supporting themselves, and exposed to neglect in turbulent ages, the early Grecian poets were thrown entirely upon the natural vigour of their genius. Unless engaged in the service of the oracles or temples, or appearing in the character of diviners and prophets, they were destitute of all other patronage, but what their gifts in song, and their muse, could procure. Yet, under these disadvantages, their productions were such as made them to be taken for some supernatural inspiration. When Amphion * struck the lyre, the stones were said to leap up to rebuild the walls of Thebes. Linus's † skill in harmonious verse was so eminent, that he was reckoned to have vied with Apollo in his art, and to have owed his death to the resentment of the god, for his being brought into comparison with him. His fatal exit became the subject and original of a poem, composed in a singular strain of the mournful elegy, and which was imitated in several foreign countries. Musaeus's ‡ celebrity for his hymns to the gods, and his excelling in the species of poesy called Eumolpean, obtained for him a monument on an eminence near Athens, where he often sung his verses ||. Diogenes Laertius supporting, but in the weakest manner, his argument, that philosophy originated, not with the nations he calls barbarous, but with the Greeks, alledges that some of the compositions of Musaeus and Linus were of the philosophic kind, or a sort of poetical *cosmogony*; which is not probable. He pretends to prove this only by a citation of the first line of one of them, and a bare and unauthorized assertion with respect to both, that such pieces were written by them. He then makes a rapid and strange transition to the introductory verse of the philosopher Anaxagoras's poem on the origin of the world, as being an imitation of that which he had before quoted from Linus. Ac-

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cording

* Pausanias Boeoticis, lib. 9. fol. edit. Hanov. p. 568.

† Ibid. p. 581.

‡ Ibid. Phocicis. lib. 10. p. 517.

|| In Prooemio. There can indeed be nothing more absurd or ridiculous than his saying, that Greece must have given birth to philosophy, because it abhorred the name of barbarous; which epithet the Greeks thought fit to bestow upon all other nations.

according to Pausanias *, an investigator of antiquities, no composition of Musaeus, which could be reckoned authentic, was transmitted, except his hymn to Ceres; and as to Linus, the report he makes is nearly the same †; and although Diodorus Siculus ascribes to him a poem in the Pelasgian diction, the subject of it is said to be the acts of the first Bacchus; and beside it, he mentions no other but some pieces of a like fabulous kind.

Contemporary with these, and having yet superior fame, appeared Orpheus, of Thracian birth, but said to be Linus's disciple, whose musical talents, and the harmonious strain of his verses, are represented of such potent efficacy, as to have drawn the woods and wild beasts after him ‡; and at last, in the case of Eurydice, to have soothed the unrelenting powers of Pluto's domain. Yet, when we consider the great authority he acquired not only in Thrace, but over a large part of Greece, we must suppose it to have been procured by something more than the charms of his poetry. He must have availed himself of the character he had, and which Horace || gives him of being a sacred person, and an interpreter of the will of the gods; and hence his influence was exerted, not according to the common fable, in making beasts stand agast around him, but inducing men, from the dread of invisible powers, to quit their dreary haunts, and their blood-stained caves, to associate together, and assume the features of humanity. For this operation, it seems the Thracian seer § had qualified himself by residing in Egypt, and carrying along with him, from that equal nursery of science and superstition, the names and worship of a number of fabulous divinities. Upon him, therefore ¶¶, some Grecian authors have thrown the reproach of many of the absurd and unhallowed rites in their popular religion, and the extravagance, and the immoral tendency of their poetic mythologies. This duplicity of character imputed to him appears so unworthy of one who had ever written a line of what are called the *Orphic* verses ††, that some

* Ibid.

† Lib. 3.

‡ Philostrati Icon. fol. p. 842.

|| Silvestres homines, facer interpresque deorum,

Caedibus et victu foedo deterruit *Orpheus*,Dictus ob hoc, lenire tigres rabidosque leones. *Ars Poetic.* v. 291.

§ Diodor. Sicul. lib. 4. p. 232.

¶¶ Diogen. Laert. Diodor.

†† Suidas in voce; Eusebii Praeparat. Evange.

some of the learned, supposing only a few of them to be genuine, have gone in search of another Orpheus, to whom they might be ascribed, in a much more antient age. But we enter not into a digression, which, with the appearance of literary labour, would introduce a much controverted subject, productive of most obscure conjectures. We shall, therefore, only subjoin what seems most remarkable in Pausanias's account of Orpheus's poems *. After observing that he derived his greatest reputation from his knowledge in religious initiations and expiatory rites for crimes, he adds, that those who were conversant in the writings of the poets, acknowledged that Orpheus's hymns were not many in number, and that they were distinguished by a studied brevity of the verses, but that, for elegant expression, they might be placed next to Homer; who, by a sort of destiny, was ever held in the highest estimation.

At length the aera of the father of the Epic muse came, to adorn that species of poetry with all the invention, and with all the embellishments of which it was susceptible, and to include in it a just copy of human characters, and a display of the popular theology of the Greeks, and of the fables grafted upon it. About the same time, Hesiod appeared, to reduce into a more connected view the origin, and genealogies of their deities. It is to be observed, that these two poets varied from each other in assigning the first principles of things, out of which all others were generated. The one, as has been said, without particularly unfolding his idea, ascribes to *Oceanus*, or the watery element, and to *Tethys*, or the earth, the *parentage* of all things. The other, as if he had considered his subject more attentively, and meant to treat it more philosophically, not only adduces † several first principles, as Chaos, Tartarus, Erebus, and Love, but infers some effect produced by their mutual intercourse and action upon one another. His meaning, indeed, is not very plain from his *Theogonia*, as we now have it; but Aristotle and other philosophers generally quote Hesiod, and not Homer, as the primary or most ancient Grecian author of a sort of theory of the constitution of the world from several discordant principles. But if, in this re-

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spect,

* Graeciae descript. lib 9. p. 586.

† In Theogon.

spect, any disregard was shown to Homer as a physiologist, some of his admirers, not satisfied with animadverting upon the propriety of it, endeavoured to render him a more than sufficient compensation *. In the transport of their zeal, or in the extravagance of their imagination, this father of verse, who never affects to be mystical or obscure in delivering whatever he had learned or knew, is transformed into an allegorical poet; who, under the veil of many traditionary fables about the gods celestial and terrestrial, concealed physical explications of the phenomena of nature, and the effects of the concords and discords, to which the elements are liable. In this light, according to Heraclides Ponticus, and other commentators on Homer, various passages in the Iliad and Odyssey, are to be viewed; while the stretches of fancy made to swell the number of them, are sufficient to prove the absurdity of their hypothesis.

That Homer was conversant in all the learning of his country, and possessed, in consequence of his travels abroad, more than what its domestic stock in that age afforded, can hardly be called in question †. In the sculpture of Achilles's shield alone, he has included what may be reckoned the circle of the sciences and arts, which were then known in Greece.—The elements are divided into earth, air, water, and fire; and the celestial signs of the Pleiades, Hyades, the arctic Bear, called also the *Wain*, which never sets in the ocean, but looks towards Orion, are introduced. Descriptions follow of the policies of cities in war and in peace, and especially of public festivities, and rural scenes of agriculture and harvest, with their attendant pleasures. But to suppose, with the allegorical interpreters of the poet, that we may discover his physical knowledge in the mythology of Juno, connected with her consort Jupiter, and her other two brothers, Neptune and Pluto, in their separate dominions, and from thence trace the elementary sympathies and antipathies as understood by him, must be owned to be a reading of his text merely imaginary, and ascribing to him allusions to science, which, as it is not credible he ever thought of, so the explications of his supposed mystical meanings must ever be liable to doubt and perplexity. The
allegories.

* In Opusculis Mytholog. oct. edit. in Homeri Vita.

† Iliad, lib. 18. ad fin.

allegories to be found in him are such as poetry, from its original, had invented, and to which Homer's creative imagination gave a larger extent; and being chiefly personifications of inanimate nature, or of the human passions, or of some of the most striking accidents to human life, they cannot be mistaken, and are generally called by their common names. But if there be any allegorical allusions to physical subjects, or the phenomena of the natural world, they must be allowed to be those of the simplest and plainest kind. The science of physics was then among the Greeks, and for several ages after, in too much obscurity to be thrown into allegory, and treated in the mystical style; unless we suppose that the little of it that was known, and which every intelligent person was acquainted with, might render it easy to Homer, and other poets, to deliver, in a poetic dress, the inconsiderable pittance understood of it.

But, if Homer cannot be granted to have philosophised in this mystical manner, his pretensions to a name in another kind of philosophy, the value of which signalises him more than that imposed on him by fantastic commentators, may well be admitted. The wonderful capacity and penetration of his mind enabled him either to form to himself, or to embrace the most distinct and just ideas of human actions and characters, with a discrimination of them as deserving, in several estimates, different proportions of praise or of blame, and to mark them in his works with the accuracy of a philosopher, and the liveliness of a poet, in an extent that has rendered him a great original in such interesting delineations. His celebrity upon this ground produced the ridiculous contention that Seneca * observes had taken place among the sects of the philosophers, all of whom occasionally quoting him as an indisputable authority, and some of them holding him forth as the particular patron of their tenets, it came to be a critical question, whether, upon the whole, he might be most accounted a Platonist, or a Peripatetic, an Epicurean, or a Stoical philosopher; while, as that author remarks, the justest conclusion appeared to be, that, as he could not surely be appropriated by all of them, neither by some of them more than by others, he truly might be pronounced to belong properly to none of them.

But,

* Epist. 88.

But, notwithstanding this honour paid to Homer by the generality of the philosophers, when they only considered the extent of his genius, and the many just rules and observations relative to moral, civil, or political conduct, to be collected from him, the more critical and speculative amongst them accounted him unworthy of the name of a philosopher, and to be condemned as a moralist, on account of his gross and ignominious fictions about the characters and actions of the gods. This indeed could bear no apology, but the insufficient one, that he advanced no opinions of his own, and only, by the licence allowed to poets, copied the traditions and fables invented before his time, and which had obtained a general credit. Upon this head, it may be truly said, that he not only retailed, but did more to support and embellish that corrupt theology, than any ordinary poet could have done. The portraits he has drawn of the fabulous divinities, with the distinctive epithets, and colouring of their different personages, would be no less striking to the imaginations of men, when impressed only with sensible ideas, than were afterwards some of their capital statues and figures, with the characteristic ensigns of the thunderbolt, the aegis, the trident, the torches, the serpents, and thyrses, or wreathed spears, wrought by the skillful hands of Phidias or Praxiteles, who were reckoned to have borrowed their ideas from the picturesque poet. We might therefore, with reason, conclude, that the poetical, or Homeric, theology ought to be thrown aside, as containing nothing but what is opposite to every rational conception of deity, and even to any common notion of beings, of a moral nature, superior to men. Yet we have to observe, what will afterwards be found exemplified in some of the more approved systems of philosophy, that, where a false and pernicious principle was entertained, which, if admitted in its proper consequences, would have overthrown every dictate of reason, and every moral sentiment, a qualification of it, in some shape or other, was interposed; and although, by this means, the system was marked with a glaring contradiction, it was still imagined to have consistency. It is no wonder, then, that the poets, who pretended not to connection in their doctrines, made no scruple of blending together, as they pleased, those which were most opposite: And we may
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rather admire the pains Homer has taken to patch up his motely system of theology, and to palliate, if possible, its most palpable depravities.

This attention of the poet is most apparent in the qualifying touches he has given to the character of his supreme god. Jupiter, with all his profligacy, has certain attributes of decency suitable to a celestial power assigned him. He is not only the ruler of the skies, the cloud compelling Jove, and the thunderer *, but is called the father of the gods and of men. Although his acts often prove the contrary †, he declares the impartiality of his procedure, and that he is the powerful controller of the strifes of the other divinities. He brings forth his golden scales to weigh, in their equal balance, the different destinies ordained for the Greeks and Trojans ‡. He declares Mars to be, of all the other celestials, the one most hateful to him, on account of his rage for war. He is represented || as punishing, in a signal manner, the treacherous violators of public faith, and as being the guardian of the duties of hospitality, and the protector of supplicants at the altars, and strangers. The poet also teaches §, in several passages, that, although neither gods nor men could avert the decrees of fate, yet human vices and follies were to be regarded as the immediate and just causes of the many evils and sufferings of mankind; and that good and virtuous men were dear to the gods, who often inspired them with wise and salutary counsels. In this manner was Homer, when he administered the poison of the popular theology of his country, attentive to mingle with it in his works all the lenient correctives it could receive, and without which, indeed, he could not have engrossed it into such poems as the Iliad and Odyssey. That the natural light of his mind was superior to the belief of its grossest absurdities, there can hardly be a doubt entertained; and from what is further to be added about his notions of the immortality of human souls, we may presume that he was assisted in it, and in some other topics connected with theology, by what he learned in foreign countries.

That the human soul survived the body, and, like a parting vision in sleep, or an airy vapour, fled from it, at death, to the realms of Pluto,
or,

* Odyss. lib. 1.

|| Odyss. lib. 9.—14.

† Iliad, lib. 8.

§ Ibid. lib. 1. ad initium.

‡ Ibid. lib. 5.

or, by the favour of the gods *, to the fields of Elysium, is well known to have been the doctrine of the most ancient Grecian poets. But whether this implied an opinion of the soul's natural immortality, is a question of much uncertainty. In some respects, to the departing soul † they ascribe a measure of intelligence superior to what it ever had before; and, in others, they represent it, even in its separate state, as having an imbecillity and weakness below that of its condition in the body. Patroclus dying, predicts the fall of Hector by the spear of Achilles; and the Trojan chief, prostrate on the ground ‡, discovers yet more prescience, by foretelling the death of that invincible hero by the weak hand of Paris. In the shades below, the *idola*, or spectres, although not tangible, or capable of an embrace, are yet afraid of being wounded § by Ulysses's sword; and they have no recollection of what passed in the world, until they taste the blood of the victims. 'Strange it is ||,' exclaims Achilles, after seeing Patroclus's ghost in a dream, 'there must be in the regions below some such spectre, or image of the deceased man, as I have now beheld; though it be only an airy form. Patroclus in tears, but in his wonted shape, stood by me, and complained of what he had suffered.' How long Sisyphus might roll his still recoiling stone, or Tantalus catch at, but not imbibe the fugitive waters, we are left to conjecture. In the Elysian fields, where departed souls ** are said to lead the happiest lives, where no chilling snow, or winter's watery cloud is known, but soft and recreating zephirs are wafted from the smooth movement of the ocean; even there the souls are represented as not in a perfect state of contentment. They follow still, as they can, their wonted pursuits, however vain and fantastic; or they wander about dejected, and sad, for their abrupt, or premature removal from the scenes of them in the world. 'In these fields,' says Ulysses, 'I also beheld the divine Hercules, that is to say, his *image* ††; for he himself is present with the immortal gods, a partaker of their celestial pleasures.' Many, and various, are the comments of the learned upon the import of these

* Odyss. lib. 11. Iliad, lib. 22.

p. 311.

† Ibid. lib. 22. p. 389.

|| Ibid. lib. 23. p. 397.

** Ibid. lib. 4.

† Iliad, lib. 17. Spondan. edit.

§ Odyss. lib. 11. p. 154.

†† Ibid. lib. 11. p. 167.

these expressions; and the most approved explication is, to understand them in a sense adopted afterwards in the Pythagorean philosophy. In this conception of them, the poet is supposed to hold forth, in the example of Hercules, three constituent parts of the human frame; one the corporeal, and mortal part; another more subtile, and sensitive, having the exact image of the body, but not susceptible of dissolution with it; and the third, the pure spiritual and immortal substance of the soul itself, congenial to that of the celestial beings.

But, however plausible this interpretation may appear, it is liable to several objections. It applies to human souls * in general, or at least to those of heroes, what is only said of Hercules in particular; who, according to the poetic story, owed his *apotheosis*, or admission to the celestial abodes, to his singularly virtuous labours on earth, which were judged by the gods to merit this recompense. It is unsupported by any other instance, or allusion in Homer, of his having such a conception of the human constitution; which appears to be resolved by him only into two parts, the gross body, and its similitude, or airy form. Lastly, it holds forth an idea of pure spirit, or soul of an incorporeal nature; which is more than can be inferred to be Homer's account of the substance of his immortal gods themselves.

To deliver, in a question of this kind, an opinion, unattended with some hesitation about the certainty of it, would be absurd presumption. But, without entering into a detail of arguments, it appears, upon considering the whole mythological doctrine of Homer about the gods, and human souls, that it conveyed no other conception of an immaterial substance, but that of a more subtile, active, and indissoluble body; and that the idea of such a distinct nature, either in divine beings, or in men, was not entertained until a more accurate philosophy was, in a subsequent age, imported into Greece; and that, as the opinion of the immateriality of celestial beings was connected with that of *one* eternal and invisible mind in the universe, so the notion of the natural immortality of human souls was generally supported upon the persuasion of their pre-existence to the bodily state, and their appointment to cer-

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* Vid. Spondani. Comment. in Odyss. lib. II.

tain vicissitudes in it. The tenet of their immortality upon this ground *, Herodotus affirms to have been first taught by the Egyptians, and from them communicated to the Greeks, although some of his countrymen assumed it as their own invention. It was, as he understood it, to this purpose ; that the human soul, for the sake either of punishment or purgation, from corporeal attachments, was ordained to roll through all the variety of animal bodies, whether those of the earth, or of the water, or of the air ; and having completed its course of such vicissitudes, in the space of three thousand years, it then returned to animate a human bodily form. But this doctrine, or what was similar to it, was by no means peculiar to the Egyptians. It obtained among the Celtae of Gaul, whose Druids † taught that the human soul did not perish, but passed from one body to another, and held also this general principle, that all things which were in existence, although changeable in their corporeal forms, retained still their distinct natures or essences. The immortality was the boasted principle of the Scythian Getae ‡, who got their particular denomination from it ; and, together with that of the transmigration, was generally spread amongst the eastern nations, as the common doctrine of their philosophers.

From the survey now taken of the philosophy of the Greeks in the poetic age, we may understand to what it amounted. One principle in it was that of a cosmogony, or a generation of the world in time, either from Chaos, or Night, according to Hesiod, or from Water and Earth, as Homer states it. The conception, *that the world had a beginning of its existence*, as it is the most just, and best supported in reason, when taken along with that of an *all sufficient cause*, may also be allowed to be the one most natural to the human mind ; and hence it was the most ancient opinion,

* In Euterpe, lib. 2.
Plin. Histor. Natur. lib. 16.
bards in the following lines :

† Caesar, Comment. lib. 6. Strabo, lib. 15.
‡ Lucan delivers the doctrine of the Celtic

—— Vobis auctoribus umbrae
Non tacitas Erebi sedes, Ditisque profundi,
Pallida regna petunt ; regit idem spiritus artus
Orbe alio ; longae canitis si cognita vitae.

PHARSALIA, lib. 1.

opinion, and that which generally prevailed amongst the philosophic class of mankind, in opposition to an inconceivable *eternity of generation*. Beside the consideration of their own production, almost every object in nature would lead men to the idea of an original and a beginning in all things. The vegetable as well as the animal species of beings presenting it incessantly to view, would give it, as it were, the first place in the human conceptions. But nothing, surely, could be more irrational and absurd than the use that was made of this principle, of the world being generated, and not eternal, by the Greeks poets, in imitation indeed of the authors from whence it was borrowed by them. They founded upon it what has been called their Theological Philosophy, marked with this strangest of all paradoxes, and which may appear to surpass the most vulgar credulity, that gods, or divine beings, originated either from some primary state of things, called by an unintelligible name, that could stand for nothing, or from parts of matter, to which that which signified any thing animated, sensitive, or rational, not to say human or divine, could never be applied.

S E C T. II.

Of the Appearance, and Characters of the Seven Sages of Greece.—Of the Rise of the Ionic School of Philosophy; and the Physical Tenets held by the Successors in it.

ANTIENTLY, the profession, as well as the name of a philosopher, was for a long time unknown in Greece *. Even the man who was called *wise* was understood to be one rendered such by his age and experience, or a more extensive intercourse with mankind. He who, like Nestor, could remember, and recite what he had seen and observed of the actions and characters of men, for two or three generations, and make proper reflections upon them, was the sage of his times. Wisdom was conceived to imply nothing more than the prudent counsels of action in life. The study of things in the natural world, or of any science that required much speculation, was incompetent to a people constantly agitated by intestine factions, or engaged in foreign enterprises. Intelligence of this kind was accounted the privilege only of the diviner, the priest, or the prophet: Yet none of these kindred characters of men can be supposed to have been, in respect of acquired knowledge, equal to what they were in Egypt, and other countries, where they were put under a regular establishment, that afforded the means and opportunity of cultivating the useful arts, and more abstract sciences. In none of the Grecian states were the priests a tribe of men by themselves, to whom a certain rank, and special emoluments, belonged. Their persons were held sacred; but their other privileges were confined to the limits of their particular sanctuaries; and their benefits were free gifts, and only casual. Hence they formed no schools of science; and so far from

* Themist. Orat. 26. fol. edit. p. 39.

from being connected, or holding a mutual communication, the oracles and shrines of the deities which they attended were often in emulation, and rivals of one another.

Beside their *bards*, therefore, the ancient Greeks had no instructors in any branch of knowledge; and all the study of these poets was to render their songs agreeable, and to adapt the subjects and embellishments of them to the taste of their countrymen. By the retail of the fictions about the Gods, they may be said to have turned Greece, in most of its districts, into *romantic* ground; when every considerable city, every remarkable mountain, every fertile plain, every shady grove, or chrystal stream, was celebrated in song as the haunt of one or more of their numberless divinities. The imaginations of the Greeks were captivated with these poetic tales; to which were added, in the taste of those above the vulgar, the interesting productions of the epic poet. Fables, or wonderful narratives, episodes of various kinds, heroic actions and characters, and marvellous or surprising incidents, entering into their contexture, they were calculated to move all the springs of the human passions. After the publication of Homer's two great exemplars in this species of poetry, in which the Greeks were flattered with the exhibition, not only of their first heroes, but even of the grandchildren of these heroes, pitched together with the contending deities, in a famous field of martial strife; all their delight and admiration, and all their applause, were made to run with a rapid current to the side of epic fable and composition. Poetry in this acceptable strain, or in what was similar to it, was only attended to, and became the general entertainment. For a course of near three centuries, no rational speculation seems to have been entered upon, nor any inquiry made, with respect to the origin of the world, or a first principle of things, beyond what Homer and Hesiod had thrown out in their poems, until Thales and Pythagoras appeared; or, if there were any such productions, they were allowed, like the genuine poems of Orpheus, to sink into obscurity and oblivion.

In the neglect and disregard of all study and literary improvement, but that of the poetic kind, the shrines of the gods maintained the highest reputation, and their oracles were consulted not only about such events as human wisdom could not foresee, but with respect to those
which

which required no extraordinary share of natural sagacity or penetration to comprehend. From the superstitious and absurd belief, that every considerable resolution or step to be taken in life, ought to proceed upon some oracular authority, the exercise of common reason appeared to be altogether suspended among the vulgar, and discouraged among the more intelligent. To unloose this fetter upon the human mind, beside the requisite of superior judgment, it was necessary that those who first attempted it, should have obtained, in a way not liable to misconstruction, a measure of public credit and esteem, for the rectitude and probity of their counsels and advice. It was in this manner that philosophy, wearing her simplest garb, and venturing upon embarrassed ground with a timid step, may be said to have made her appearance in the character of those men called the sages of Greece. Although far from pretending to bring their wisdom in competition with that of the interpreters of the will of the gods, as the prophets and priests stiled themselves, yet the reputation they had acquired for ingenious sentiments on many subjects, for knowledge in matters of civil policy, and for prudent and virtuous conduct in private life, caused men to look upon the exertions of the human faculties with a more respectful eye, and to consider them as sources of wisdom more tractable, perspicuous, and evident, than were generally the ambiguous and dark responses given by the oracles.

The wise men were commonly reckoned seven in number; yet some authors abridge*, and others enlarge the catalogue of them; they also disagree about the personages most worthy to be included in it. Plato expunges the name of Periander†, the intelligent, but infamous tyrant of Corinth, inserted amongst the seven, and substituting in its place that of Myson of Chene, reckons them up in the following order: Thales, Pittacus, Bias, Solon, Cleobulus, Myson, and Chilo. The three first, and the fifth, were natives of Mitylene, Priene, and Lindus‡, Grecian cities in Asia Minor. The fourth and two last were of Athens and Sparta. To this list several authors were inclined to add as contemporaries,

* Diogen. Laert. 4to edit. p. 60.

† In Protagora, vel Sophista.

‡ Pausanias Phocicis, lib. 10. p. 655.

raries, and not unequal in celebrity, Epimenides, the Cretan poet, Pherecydes Syrus, Pythagoras's first instructor, Pisistratus, the famous invader of the Athenian liberties, and, lastly, Anacharsis, the Scythian philosopher. With regard to these, omitting Pisistratus, a few remarks are only necessary. Epimenides may be rather ranked among the poets, who affected to be thought a favourite of the gods than a disciple of philosophy * ; notwithstanding he is said to have written a genealogy of the gods, joined with that of the Curetes and Corybantes, who nursed Jupiter, to the extent of five thousand verses. His supposed prediction about the mischief † that would arise to the Athenians from their *munchia*, or fortified harbour, which was not fulfilled in less time than that of sixty-four Olympiads, was sufficient to make the character of a prophet he pretended to, be recollected ; although there was nothing very wonderful in what he foretold. It was more to the credit of his judgment, if, as it is said, he assisted Solon in the framing of his laws.

Of all the Greeks of his time Pherecydes, of the isle of Syrus, next to Thales, was accounted the most learned. Upon the authority of Theopompus, he is said to have been the first of them ‡, who wrote, as we may understand it, in prose, and philosophically, upon nature, and the gods ; and a small work of his, upon the origin of all things, was extant in Diogenes Laertius's time, who gives the introductory sentence of it, " Jupiter, and time, and earth, always were." He is quoted by Aristotle, as delivering this just sentiment, that the *principle which generated all other things was the best in the world* : But of his cosmogony, and of his manner of reasoning upon it, no particular account remains §. The doctrine which gave him most celebrity, and of which he is allowed to have been the first author in Greece, was, *that human souls were immortal*, or had, from their nature and substance, a perpetuity of existence ; for, unless his tenet be taken in this sense, it could not be accounted new, or unknown among the Greeks. That Pythagoras, his
disciple,

* Diog. Laert. in Vita.

† Diogen. Laert. ibid. Plutarch in Solone.

‡ Diogen. in Vita. Sextus Empericus, lib. 8. p. 367.

§ Cicero. Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 1. p. 121.

disciple, traversed Egypt and Assyria, without finding this principle asserted, and that he owed his knowledge of it solely to his Grecian master, appears to be a loose and unauthorized affirmation, and insisted upon * by those, who, with St Augustine, would represent the most intelligent part of the heathen world ignorant of what a sage of Greece knew, at a time when philosophy only began to be studied in that country, and the most rational gave but the first specimens of their genius for it.

Anacharsis, whose mother was a Grecian, composed several poetical pieces in the Greek language and others in that of his country. The subjects of them are said to have been, the Scythian customs, the Grecian manners, and treatises of war. His father's family was of the † regal dignity in Scythia ; and by his appearance in Athens, and his introduction to Solon, he created admiration of his person, of his pointed yet bold elocution, and of his acquired knowledge. The natural vigour of his mind, and the quickness of his imagination, were evinced by the just observations he made on the novelties he beheld, and by his spirited replies to questions put to him in conversation. To a vain youth of Athens, who, considering him as a barbarian, accosted him in an insulting manner, he said, " Why this staring and contemptuous look ? " do you not understand, that what I may appear to you in your country, try, you would undoubtedly be thought in mine."

Thales, the Milesian, is justly placed at the head of the seven wise men ; for, if Solon be excepted, none of them were his equal, either in extensive fame, or in the variety of his natural and acquired endowments. A private and studious life was preferred by him, while the rank of his family entitled him to be advanced to the most honourable offices of a public kind. He appeared to consider himself as born to study nature ; and, instead of being no more than the citizen of a particular † commonwealth, that he had a superior connection with the world at large, and especially with those regions of it, where science was cultivated,

* Vid. *Histoire Critique de la Philosophie*, par Deslandes, 8vo. edit. tom. prem. p. 351.

† Diogen. in Vita. Plutarch *ibid*.

‡ Diogen. Laertius in Vita.

cultivated, or philosophic ingenuity held in esteem. Doubtful it may be reckoned, whether, in the infancy of physical, geometrical, and astronomical study in Asiatic Greece, he had, or could find, in any corner of it, a preceptor, or one qualified to instruct him in the elements of these sciences. Several geometrical theorems of his invention are mentioned by ancient authors, which are, indeed, of the simpler kind, and no more than what are comprehended in some of the plainest propositions in Euclid. Yet, on account of their being the first openings of the mathematical science, a curiosity has prevailed, and pains have been taken, both in ancient and modern times, to distinguish and ascertain them, although it has not been done in a satisfactory manner. The ancient authors who recite these and other discoveries of the Milesian philosopher, vary from one another, and are deficient in the correctness and precision requisite to their being fully understood * ; a disadvantage to which the records of scientific inventions are particularly liable. Thus we are informed by various authors, that Thales predicted the famous solar eclipse that ensued in the fourth year of the 48th Olympiad, and prevented the astonished armies of the Medes and Lydians from engaging in battle. But we are only told in general by Plutarch, that he made this discovery by observing the positions of the sun and moon, with respect to each other, and to the earth, without any further explanation of the theory held by him about the motions of these heavenly bodies, by which he might be enabled to form, not a gross conjecture only, but a certain calculation. His improvement of the Grecian Calendar, by dividing the year into 365 days, was certainly an evidence of his accuracy in a computation connected with knowledge in astronomy ; yet in this † he is said to have adopted the Egyptian reckoning, as preferable to that which obtained in Greece. To make up an exact circuit of time, the Greeks intercalated a month every third year, computing each year to consist of 360 days ; a method less precise than that of an addition to their annual number. He is also said to have observed,

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with

* Cicero de Divinatione, lib. 4. p. 274. Plinii Hister. Natural. lib. 2. Herodot. lib. 1.

† Herodotus, *ibid.*

with exactness, the tropical points of the sun's retrograde motions in the heavens, and to have composed treatises upon them and the equinoxes.

Thales, to complete his knowledge in geometry and astronomy, undertook a voyage to Egypt; where, beside the structures of the temples, those wonderful ones of the pyramids, and of the artificial canals and sluices, were monuments of the progress made in the mathematical sciences. He is said to have given occasion to the priests of Memphis to admire his ingenuity, by his method of measuring the heights of the pyramids from their shadows. He took, according to Jamblichus *, the projection of the shadows at mid-day, and compared them with those of other known and measured elevations. This account is exceptionable, if not an erroneous one. It is doubtful whether, in the latitude of Egypt, where the sun, in his farthest recess, falls but a few degrees short of being vertical at noon, there is a projection of the shadows in such a proportion as to afford a measurement adequate to a just solution of the problem; more especially as, from the declining form of the pyramids, the shadows must be much absorbed in their gross and wide extended bases. Plutarch gives † a more mathematical representation of Thales's procedure, which is resolvable into the fourth proposition of the sixth book of Euclid. In Egypt, the Grecian sage found such entertainment to his inquisitive mind, that he prolonged his stay for several years, and returned not to Miletus until far advanced in age. With the merited name of the chief of the seven wise men, and being the first of the Greeks who inquired into natural causes, he founded the Ionic school of philosophy at Miletus, which, not long after his time, was removed to Athens. About the commencement of this æra of science, the school called the Italic likewise took its rise from Pythagoras, born in the 47th Olympiad, when Thales was in the height of his fame. Jamblichus asserts, what may be questioned from chronology, that Pythagoras visited the Milesian philosopher, and conversed with him in the decline of his life.

Thales,

* In Vita Pythag. lib. 2.

† In convivio Sapient.

Thales, confiding in his physical knowledge, endeavoured to trace the origin of at least all sublunary and corporeal things to one elementary principle. Although he must have contemned the poetic cosmogonies, founded altogether on tradition, he saw no reason, it seems, for receding entirely from Homer's parentage of the world, when he adopted water as the source of all generation. It is not said *, that, with the poet, he took earth into copartnery with it, nor that with the priests of Egypt, he joined heat to humidity, the better to help out the process of nature. Water alone, considered as a simple and uncompounded element, was deemed of efficacy sufficient for all natural productions. It was known to be essential to the vegetation of the earth, to the growth of plants, and to the procreation and nourishment of animals. It might even be reckoned to enter into the constitution of the hardest bodies, and pervade all minerals. Thales was the more supported in his tenet, from an opinion, which then commonly prevailed, that the fire of the sun itself, and of the stars in heaven, was fed from humid vapours. But notwithstanding the utmost allowance that may be made for this first essay in physics, it must be owned, that, to explain the concretion of solid substances, such as stones and metals, from the fluid element alone, without any thing accessory to it, was a theory as vague and absurd as could well be imagined. The slightest attention too was sufficient to discover, that water is impregnated with air, and seems to depend upon that element being rarer or denser, for the fluidity or congelation of its globules. Water, therefore, could neither be reckoned the simplest element, nor of itself an active and productive one, and the assumption of it as a principle bore little testimony to the depth of Thales's physical investigations, nor to those of the Egyptian priests, if he borrowed it from them.

In tracing this first stage of the Grecian philosophy, it is to be observed, that the word *αρχη*, or principle, in the sense in which it was afterwards generally applied by philosophers †, signified that which was void of composition, ungenerated, and the efficient cause of other things. But, for a considerable time in the early study of philosophy, as the

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meanings

* Ioan. Stobaei Eclogae Physicae, lib. 1. fol. edit. Antwerp, p. 26. Diogen. Laert. in Vita.

† De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 2.

meanings of words are often undefined, it was used sometimes in the sense subsequently affixed to it, and more commonly to express the material element, which, although neither simple nor uncompounded, was supposed, like Thales's water, to operate principally in the constitution of other substances. From this ambiguous application of the term, it came to be alledged, especially by the sceptics, that Thales, and some others who followed him in the Ionic school, and called their element an *αρχη*, ought to be understood, not only as referring to it the composition of the material world, but the origin and efficiency of all other beings. In this gross interpretation of their doctrine, they must be accounted as wretched reasoners, and no less miserable theists than the poets before them, who made their chaos, or the ocean, productive of all the divinities and daemons they imagined to exist in the heavens, or in the earth. That the subjects of philosophy were treated by them in a confused manner, and that, not having a term such as *στοιχιον*, which was used by more accurate philosophers to distinguish the material element from the immaterial and efficient principle, they blended together their metaphysical and their physical reasonings, may be allowed, according as Thomassinus and Cudworth have shown by their learned investigations. But to infer that, upon the subject of an original principle of all things, they coincided in their ideas with the poets, so as to hold forth water or earth, or air, or fire, to be the active cause of the diversified natures and substances of the world, must be a degradation of their names as philosophers. It may be enough to render us doubtful of the credit to be given to such an account of their absurdity, to consider, that, instead of any entire work of these philosophers, we have transmitted to us only some fragments, or maimed extracts from what remained of their writings, by authors who lived long after their time; and who may be supposed, in several points, to have mistaken their meaning, or explained it in a manner agreeable to their prejudices.

With respect to Thales, the sentiments of deity, of the fabric of the world, and of the human soul, ascribed to him by several authors, are more than sufficient to exempt him from the imputation thrown upon some of his successors in the school of Ionia *. Even Cicero, reasoning as an academic,

* De Natura Deorum, lib. 1. p. 199.

academic, says, "Thales, who first inquired into physics, affirmed water to be the first principle of things; but that *God* was the mind which formed them out of that element." Yet, for the sake of supporting the academic doubt, he endeavours to twist this sentence into a meaning favourable to it, and that Thales could be understood to ascribe no more originality or efficiency to the principle of mind in the world, than he did to that of water. We may judge how unjust the sceptical sting was, by what Diogenes * Laertius reports of his opinions of the divinity: "Of all things that are, Thales asserted, that *God* is the most ancient; for he is ungenerated, and without beginning. The fairest of things is the world; for it is his work; and the swiftest is mind; for it runs over all things." Being asked, if he thought a wicked person could hide his actions from the observance of the gods? "No," said he, "not even in the meditation of them." According to Stobaeus's † account of Thales's doctrine, and that of those who followed it, the first cause was held to be immoveable; which, as is observed by Stanley, comes near to the idea which Aristotle assumed as his own, that *the deity was an immoveable mover*. By the report of the same author, Thales's ‡ definition of soul was, "a nature which moved always, and of itself;" an idea delivered by Pythagoras, and generally entertained amongst the philosophers who were not corporealists, until Aristotle attempted to explode it. But enough has been said to prove the uncertainty, if not fallacy of the general assertion, insisted upon by Bayle, and other modern sceptics, that, until Anaxagoras appeared, the doctrine taught in the Ionic school was only *materialism*. Thales expired, when a spectator of the Olympic games—Born in the 35th celebration of them, and dying at the 58th—His age extended to above ninety years.

Before proceeding to recite the philosophic tenets of his successors in the school of Ionia, we shall here conclude all that is necessary to be said upon the abilities and characters of those who shared with him the title of wise men. In the period in which they appeared, Greece experienced.

* In Vita.

† Eclogae Physicae, lib. i. cap. 16. p. 31.

‡ Ibid. cap. 40. p. 93.

ced in almost every state some political revolution ; and the ardent contest was, whether the government of one, or of the *optimates*, or of the many, should prevail in various cities. It is well known how much Solon was engaged in this controversy, and what successful resistance he made to the dominion of a single person in Athens. What Thales was in science, compared with the poetic Cosmogonists, that, in a great measure, the reformer of the Athenian state may be reckoned in his political and moral knowledge, when put in balance with the other sages. Studied maxims with regard to human life in general, and the prudent conduct of it in particular situations, joined with the capacity of advising and acting properly in the offices of civil government, were what chiefly distinguished them *. Plutarch's account of the ancient wisdom appears expressive of that which they possessed. After mentioning Pittheus, the grandfather of Theseus, as one who had signal reputation for understanding and knowledge, he adds, ' wisdom then consisted, principally, " in the invention of such short and grave sentences as Hesiod has " thrown into his book of *works and days* †.' " They were," says Plato of the seven sages, " all of them studious of the laconic wisdom ; for in " Lacedemon, the study of wisdom was most ancient amongst the Greeks ; " and there the greatest number of those called sages were to be found. " But the Spartans, to avoid envy, industriously concealed this pre- " eminence, and took care to prevent all strangers who came among " them from participating in their store of knowledge." He observes, that the Cretans used like precautions against any exportation of their wise sentences. To excuse this extreme reserve in some nations to communicate their knowledge, we ought to consider not only the rarity of it in those ancient times, but also, that, when it was comprehended in proverbs, which Plato calls the *first figure* of wisdom, any particular nation might easily be robbed of all its treasure, and, without the acknowledgement of it being made, forfeit to another the credit and honour of its inventions.

To guard against this disadvantage, and, at the same time, to preserve the reputation of superior wisdom affixed to these tokens of it, the apothegms were often cast into the form of *aenigmas*, or expressed in metaphorical

* In Vita Thesei.

† In Protagora.

phorical terms, allegories, or fables, such as those of Æsop. In the eastern nations, the first of these forms was in the highest esteem; so that to devise a riddle, or to solve one properly, was regarded as the test not of ready wit only, but of wisdom. The Grecian sages were not defective, but occasionally showed themselves expert in this affected mode of ingenuity. Beside Thales's answers to the King of Egypt's nice questions, Diogenes Laertius * has recorded several other replies made by them to queries in the enigmatical style.

But it was not much in the taste of the Greeks to *enigmatise*; nor did the sages affect to conceal their knowledge. Every one of them is understood to have had a wise saying, of a moral or prudential import, appropriated to him as his favourite invention. The whole of them, it is said, being inscribed upon the gate of the temple of Delphos, were, in this manner, dedicated to Apollo; and yet ancient authors disagree in assigning to each his proper apothegm †. To moralize upon life and manners, was, next to that of prescribing the first rules of civil society, and which Horace calls the *sapientia quondam* ‡, the earliest indication of the reflections and improvements of the human mind. It had taken place long before the sages appeared, and made part of the ancient poesy; out of which that profusion of moral sentences thrown out by them was, probably, in a great measure collected. They did no more than make some additions to them in a similar style. They delivered no particular explications of the rationality of their maxims, unless, perhaps, when they were by any called in question, or scorned. They distinguished

* In Vitis Cleobuli. Pittaci. et Biae.

† In the assignment of the sentences, there is a contest about that celebrated one, *know thyself*; whether it was first announced by Solon, or Thales, or Chio the Spartan, or by the Delphic oracle itself. Supposing it to appertain to Apollo, Thales comes in for rather an ungenerous one, "Be a surety, and loss is nigh." And Solon, for his saying to Croesus, "For the account of happiness in long life, look to the end of it." And Chilo, for "Hate only so far as that, perchance, you may afterwards love." To Cleobulus was given, "Nothing too much." To Pittacus, "Know opportunity." To Bias, "The illiterate, who are the multitude, are naught." To Periander, "Counsel is all."

‡ *Publica privatis fecernere, sacra profanis,
Concubitu prohibere vago, dare jura maritis,
Fuit haec sapientia quondam.*

ced in almost every state some political revolution ; and the ardent contest was, whether the government of one, or of the *optimates*, or of the many, should prevail in various cities. It is well known how much Solon was engaged in this controversy, and what successful resistance he made to the dominion of a single person in Athens. What Thales was in science, compared with the poetic Cosmogonists, that, in a great measure, the reformer of the Athenian state may be reckoned in his political and moral knowledge, when put in balance with the other sages. Studied maxims with regard to human life in general, and the prudent conduct of it in particular situations, joined with the capacity of advising and acting properly in the offices of civil government, were what chiefly distinguished them *. Plutarch's account of the ancient wisdom appears expressive of that which they possessed. After mentioning Pittheus, the grandfather of Theseus, as one who had signal reputation for understanding and knowledge, he adds, ' wisdom then consisted, principally, " in the invention of such short and grave sentences as Hesiod has " thrown into his book of *works and days* †.' " They were," says Plato of the seven sages, " all of them studious of the laconic wisdom ; for in " Lacedemon, the study of wisdom was most ancient amongst the Greeks ; " and there the greatest number of those called sages were to be found. " But the Spartans, to avoid envy, industriously concealed this pre- " eminence, and took care to prevent all strangers who came among " them from participating in their store of knowledge." He observes, that the Cretans used like precautions against any exportation of their wise sentences. To excuse this extreme reserve in some nations to communicate their knowledge, we ought to consider not only the rarity of it in those ancient times, but also, that, when it was comprehended in proverbs, which Plato calls the *first figure* of wisdom, any particular nation might easily be robbed of all its treasure, and, without the acknowledgement of it being made, forfeit to another the credit and honour of its inventions.

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stinguished not the cases when they might be found more or less applicable; and little considered whether they were, upon the whole, consistent with one another. They presented, therefore, no connected view of moral principles; but, like those who bring together the materials of an edifice in their simplest form, they left to others the more ingenious part of adapting them to the structure, and giving them the polish and the symmetry which a regular system of ethics required. In the simplicity of the age in which they appeared, this skill, as it could hardly be expected, was not looked for. Men were then contented with receiving the wise rule or precept, without having all the reasons of it unfolded to them. Of honest and worthy characters, practical teachers of morals, although not recognised under the title of Speculative Philosophers *, several of them, as Chilo, Pittacus, and Bias, bore the first offices of magistracy in their several cities, and were remembered with honour, for the eminent services rendered to them. They likewise may be considered as the first who raised the esteem of characters marked with the civil virtues alone, and separate from the dazzling accessories of military prowess and warlike glory; and the admission which others of them, as well as Solon, had to the courts of princes, upon the reputation of their virtue and knowledge, was a proof that these qualities have an intrinsic value, and fail not to excite admiration, unless in the prevalence of great depravity in the sentiments and manners of mankind.

It may be inferred from a passage in Plutarch †, that the wise men had some imitators of their characters and actions; but who, like most under that denomination, fell far behind in the representation of them. In his account of Mnesiphilas, one of Themistocles's preceptors, he says, that he was neither an orator nor natural philosopher, but a professor of what was then termed wisdom or prudence in the management of political affairs. This profession was first begun by Solon, and from him grew up, for some time, like a philosophic sect, until, in the following age, the adepts in it betook themselves to the pleadings of civil causes, and attending disputations in law. Hence, being more studious of
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* Cicero hardly allows them their common appellation. *Nam qui septem appellantur, eos, (qui ista subtilius quaerunt), in numero sapientum non habent. De Amicitia.*

† In Vita Themistoclis.

the oratorical art than of the maxims of wisdom, and of practical virtue, they generally passed under the name of *Sophists*. It was, we may suppose, in this degradation of the profession of the Grecian sages, that some of the libertine wits took occasion to throw out that indecent burlesque of their wise sentences mentioned by Athenaeus; who has retailed *, as decorations of his work, various scurrilities of a like kind, no where else to be found. But we proceed now to the account of Thales's successors in the Ionic school.

The example set by the philosopher of Miletus, for attempting to resolve the great question about the production of the world, upon some physical theory, was followed by several who succeeded him in the profession of philosophy in Ionia. Yet Anaximander, son of Praxiades, his countryman †, companion, and immediate successor, adhered not to his solution of the problem, but quitting the tract pointed out, of a particular physical principle, as insufficient, he adopted a more abstruse, and what he undoubtedly thought a more tenible hypothesis than that of any of the four elements. The infinity of nature, or of the universe, he contended, was all that was requisite to be considered; from whence the origin of the world, and all its phenomena, might be deduced ‡, without having recourse to the generation of one thing from another, or distinguishing water, or earth, or air, or fire, as bodies different in themselves, or from the universal mass; for this, being infinite, could not fail to produce worlds after worlds without end. Thus, a supposed infinity of something, or of an undetermined all, was with him the proposition by which might be explained intelligibly, all the motions, and all the apparent, if not real differences of things, either seen, felt, or understood, in the immensity of nature. And it may indeed be reckoned that kind of hypothesis, which, assuming every thing in question, any thing may be inferred from it. He did not, in plain terms, declare || of what substance his infinite nature consisted; and it

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* They set, in contrast, to each sentence, a *ragout*, or dish for the table, as dressed up by one or other of the seven Grecian cooks, who prepared the public repasts.—Athen. lib. 2.

† Cicero Academic. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 33.

‡ Diogen. Laert. lib. 2. p. 79.

|| Stobaei Eclogae Physic. lib. 1. cap. 13. p. 26. De Placitis Philosoph. cap. 3.

was only by inference, and from his making no distinction between the soul or mind, and body, and representing the gods * as being generated, and rising and setting, at long intervals, like the stars in the heavens, that he was understood to hold forth the existence of matter alone. In this conception of his hypothesis, he must have admitted what is inconceivable, an infinite magnitude, or corporeal mass, so extended, that not one atom could be added to it. Although he supposed his infinity to be immutable, he allowed what he called a *circumduction* of it; so that, by this means, numberless worlds, he fancied, might be generated out of his infinite matter, and successively † be resolved into it. He even presumed, without assigning any reason, that this circumduction ensued at equal periods of time. It is not possible to imagine a theory more profoundly obscure than this, which, notwithstanding the arbitrary suppositions made for its elucidation, never emerges in the least from the darkness of its first inexplicable principle. It was, therefore, not improperly resorted to by those philosophers who afterwards, under the cloud of metaphysics, endeavoured to prove the incomprehensibility of all things, and called the universe a *one infinite*. Although it be more presumed than evinced, that Anaximander held his infinity of nature to be only material, yet subsequent philosophers, of the sceptic or the atheistical tribe, both in ancient and modern times, have considered him as authorising, and giving, at least, the outlines of their theories of a material universe. But, as there are not even hints transmitted in what manner he reckoned his deities, or intelligent beings, to be generated, his retainers are left unaided by him, to explore the dark and dismal abysses of their speculations.

Upon the subject of particular physics and astronomy, he appears to have written with less obscurity, but not consistently; since, relaxing the immutability ‡ of his infinite, he allowed that its parts, although not the whole, might be changed. As Aristotle remarks, he made contraries proceed from one and the same principle; and so, with equal propriety, he turned his infinite into a whole, which is finite, consisting of parts. But

* Cicer. de natura deorum, lib. 1. p. 120.

† Stobaeus, ibid. cap. 21. p. De Placitis, lib. 1. c. 8. It must be supposed infinite, said he, lest all things should fail.

‡ Diog. Laert. ibid.

But how, otherwise, could he suppose the formation of particular bodies, how say that the earth was struck off, and made globular, the sun lighted up, and the stars, from their motion about the earth as a centre, acquire rotundity? According to Diogenes Laertius, he held the moon's light to be borrowed from the sun, which was an orb of the purest fire, and of equal magnitude with the earth*. Stobaeus, and the author *De Placitis*, represent his opinion of the substance of these luminaries as the same. Many are the instances of such contradictions among ancient authors, in giving the physical sentiments of the Ionic philosophers. To Anaximander, the first invention of the *gnomon*, or horoscopical dial, together with that of a geographical table, or map of the world, is ascribed by Laertius; and yet Pliny†, more accurate in such inquiries, places the former to the credit of Anaximenes. It is probable that one of them had introduced into Greece the use of the *gnomon*, which was long before known to the Babylonians, and from whom Herodotus‡ observes, various discoveries in astronomy, and the arts connected with it, were transmitted into other countries.

Anaximenes, who next succeeded to the Ionian School, was the disciple of his predecessor, and a native of the same city. Resuming one of the four elementary principles which Anaximander|| had rejected, he is said to have referred the origin of all things to air joined with infinity. But how was this ambiguous proposition to be understood? Was air itself infinite and ungenerated, or was it only finite, and yet, as a principle of generation, extended over the universe, said to be infinite? Upon comparing the authors who state the opinion of this philosopher, they appear irreconcilable. As Cicero expresses his meaning, he made air infinite, and ever in motion, to be deity; and yet either the air or the deity to be generated; for there is some ambiguity in the Roman § author's sentence. Stobaeus, without saying what existence he

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assigned

* Eclog. Phys. cap. 25. p. 55.

† Hist. Natur. lib. 2.

‡ In Euterpe, cap. 32.

|| Diogen. Laer. Stobaeus, lib. 1. p. 26.

§ Cicero's sentence is: "Anaximenes aera deum statuit, eumque gigni, esseque immensum, et infinitum ei semper in motu; quasi aut aer sine ulla forma deus esse possit, cum praesertim deum non aliqua, sed pulcherrima specie esse deceat, aut non omne, quod ortum mortalitas consequatur."—De Natur. deor. lib. 1. p. 100.

assigned to Deity, asserts that he held air infinite to be of itself productive of the universe, and that from which all finite things originate, and are resolvable into it. "Our soul," said he, which is air, is the *αἴηρ*, "or principle, which composes our frame. In like manner, air, or *spirit*, which are two names for the same thing, constitutes the world." The author *De Placitis* observes, if this air, or *spirit*, was understood to be of one simple form, how could the vast diversity of animals found in the world be produced from it, without some accessory and efficient cause? In this perplexed account of Anaximenes's original principle, it has been, with reason, suggested by some learned modern * authors, that its variation from that of his predecessor, is to be regarded as only apparent, and not real. No definition being given by Anaximander, of the powers or qualities of that nature he called infinite, nor any distinction made between the properties of one body and another, but that of hot and cold, which are not essential, but only relative qualities, Anaximenes found it proper to join an acknowledged physical principle, such as air, with that infinity, which could stand for nothing more than a new name applied to the universe. In that age when few or no physical experiments were made, air would be imagined as immense and boundless as space itself, and to have an equal claim to the attribute of infinity, and, by pervading all corporeal substances, might be concluded to operate upon it in some wonderful manner: And thus the disciple, without advancing any thing inconsistent with his master's theory, may be reckoned to have attempted no more than an explication of it.

In its more explicit form, and physically considered, it cannot be thought to exceed that of Thales in propriety. Air, although a more subtle element, is undoubtedly a degree farther removed than water from the constitution of solid bodies, and still a less competent cause of their production. Its capacity of condensation and rarefaction seems as much to require the accessories of cold and heat; and, as for the pressure of the particles of air upon one another, its weight, and elasticity; these were secrets in physiology then unknown, and for ages after undiscovered.

* Cudworth's *Intellect. System*, part 1. ch. 5. *Histoire Critique* par Deslandes, octav. edit. Amsterd. tom. 2. ch. 12.

covered. Instead, therefore, of reciting some rude notions about the aerial meteors, founded upon the qualities of an element not understood, we may rather conclude this part of the Ionic philosophy with a recollection of what was advanced in the introduction to it; that from any view that can be taken of the theories of these two philosophers, which are hardly intelligible in themselves, it cannot be determined that they were only materialists, and derived every quality and power in nature from corporeal substance. The one spoke of gods, and the other of a deity, generated; but Anaximander espoused no particular element as the source of generation, and Anaximenes only substituted one, and, joined with infinite, called it Deity; but, as appears from Cicero, left his generation, or the mode of it, to be conjectured.

By the appearance of Anaxagoras, a native of Clazomenæ, and the disciple of Anaximenes, the seat of philosophy was transferred from Miletus, in the Asiatic Ionia, to the city of Athens, although his regular institution of a school there be not exactly ascertained *. His birth is computed to the 70th Olympiad, and his departure from Ionia to the 20th year of his age, which coincides with the time of Xerxes's expedition into Greece. He renounced every study and attention but that of philosophy; which he taught under the patronage of Pericles at Athens, with no view to pecuniary reward. The innovation he made in the doctrine of the first principles of all things, or his illustration of that doctrine, was alone sufficient to give him celebrity above all the Ionic professors of science. He saw the absurdity of holding forth any one natural element, the properties of which were limited, and even the modifications it could admit circumscribed, to be the original of all the diversified bodies in nature.

In his physical speculations, he therefore thought it necessary to suppose an infinity of material principles, or at least † as many of them as there were kinds of compound bodies. These he imagined might be constituted by such particles of matter as were similar to each other, and which he termed *homoimeria*, being collected together. Thus a piece of gold was made up of many particles homogeneous, and of the quality

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 2. p. 82.

† Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 194.

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 2. p. 82.

† Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 194.

of gold; and water, and blood, bone, and iron, and other substances, were in the same manner formed by the accession of like parts to like. He owned, that these constitutional particles were concealed under various forms *. When bread, water, or other common aliment, was seen to produce hairs, veins, arteries, nerves, and bones, it is to be presumed, said he, that the seeds, or seminal particles of such compositions, are found predominant in the natural aliments, and that they are augmented in number and power by the constant use of the aliments †. He therefore denied that colours, or other perceptible qualities of bodies, could be justly ascertained by the testimony of the senses; and said that snow, which was water congealed, ought rather to appear black than white.

But it appeared to him that *mind* was the original ‡ principle of all motion in matter or body; and that not even the supposition of an infinity of matter could be accounted a sufficient cause of the distribution of its particles into the various species of compound substances, to be seen in the world, and yet less of the wise and beautiful arrangement of them in the system of nature §. From fortune, or necessity, a world so constituted and adorned could never be imagined to have its original; and that the existence ||, and intercourse of an infinite, and self-moving *mind*, were evinced from the work that was produced. This *mind* he declared to be of an incorporeal nature, and equally possessed of power and intelligence. The assertion of it as the active, and presiding principle in the universe, gave occasion to his being himself distinguished from the other Ionic philosophers, by the name of *Νους*. The supposition of *matter* pre-existing its arrangement in the world, was common to all the ancient philosophers, who pretended to give a physical theory of the generation, or origin of natural things. Their general axiom was, that *out of nothing, nothing could come, or be made*; and it must be owned, that Anaxagoras followed this received opinion, without having the idea of the

* De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 7.; et Stobaeus, lib. 1. cap. 13.

† Sextus Empiricus advers. Mathem. lib. 7. p. pag. 153.

‡ Aristot. Physica, lib. 8. cap. 1.

§ Plutarch. in Vita Periclis.

|| Cicero, De Natura Deorum, lib. 1. p. 199. Diogen. Laert. in Vita.

the *creation* of matter by his infinite mind. But, its particles were not reckoned by him to be natural bodies, previous to their specific collection * ; and his theory with respect to them, however crude and unphilosophical it may appear, is to be considered as nothing more than his assigning certain *primordia rerum*, or an imaginary species of matter, out of which he thought every sensible object having distinguishable qualities might be formed. We shall afterwards have occasion to observe what an irresolvable problem it was found among the philosophers, to determine what this *primordial* matter might be, which served for the formation of bodies constituted in the most different manners, and variously qualified.

It is allowed that Anaxagoras showed himself †, in many physical subjects, both a curious and diligent inquirer. So much did he insist upon some theories formed by him about the natural phenomena, and his physical solutions of them, that he seemed to exclude, in cases where it appeared to be necessary, the agency of his intelligent principle. It is upon this account ‡, and for the slight regard paid by him to *final causes*, that Plato represents his writings as judged reprehensible by Socrates. His speculations were extended over all the appearances of nature ; and, with singular ingenuity, if not with much depth of knowledge, he endeavoured to assign the natural causes of winds, thunder, lightening, and earthquakes, and to account for eclipses, meteors, comets, and other phenomena, in the celestial regions §. He not only undeified the moon, by declaring her to be an opaque and earthly body, shining with a borrowed light, and having hills and vallies on her surface ; but he also abolished the divinities of the stars ; which, according to his theory, were pronounced masses of solid matter, caught up from the earth by the vortex of the etherial heavens, and turned into burning stones by the rapid motion they underwent. But, in this tract of speculation, it is unnecessary to follow him ; and we may be contented with observing, that it exposed him to obloquy, and, at length, to a criminal charge for impiety at Athens ||. It appears that Pericles, who owed much of his know-

* De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 7.

† Sextus Empiric. *ibid.*

‡ Plato in *Phaedone*.

§ Diogen. Laert. in *vita*.

|| Plutarch. in *vita Periclis*.

knowledge in science to Anaxagoras's instructions, had not paid that decent and suitable attention to the support of a man devoted to philosophic study, and careless of the affairs of life, and his situation in the world. Whether, in absence of the Athenian statesman, or in some sudden eruption of faction, he was impeached, thrown into prison, and capitally condemned: Visited by Pericles in this forlorn condition, he, who before had overlooked all indifferent usage, could not help uttering this modest complaint, "They, Pericles, who would use a lamp, should take care to supply it with oil." It is not clearly ascertained in what manner his condemnation issued. Certain it is, that, by Pericles's interposition, he escaped death, but under the penalty of a heavy fine, and banishment from Athens. With sensible disgust, he left that city, and returned to Ionia. At Lampfacum he resumed the teaching of philosophy, and continued there to the end of his life.

Although the science of physics chiefly occupied his attention, and was indeed the only one professed in the Ionic school, he is said to have been the first who studied and pointed out the moral lessons * contained in the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer. His abandoning his country and his patrimony, which was considerable, and attaching himself wholly to scientific improvement, was a proof of his being singularly disinterested, and leading a life of innocent and virtuous contemplation. "Do you not care for your country?" said one to him. "No one," replied he, "cares more; but there it is," added he, pointing to the canopy of the heavens. His philosophy enabled him also to show the utmost composure when under the sentence of death. Being told that he was adjudged to suffer it, "Many years have passed," said he, "since nature pronounced this sentence upon me." He is ranked by Stobaeus † amongst the philosophers who made a distinction between soul and mind; and held the latter to be extrinsically adventitious to the human constitution. But this stands in need of clearer proof; nor is it evident what opinion he entertained of the nature of the human soul: For, according to his theory, it might be accounted unperishable, and yet of a corporeal substance. Every production in nature he maintained to arise from

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* p. 86.

† Eclog. *physic.* lib. 1. c. 40. p. 93.

from an assemblage of homogeneous particles, which might be dispersed, but could not perish, or be utterly destroyed. In this, his sentiment corresponded to one generally admitted in the ancient philosophy, "that all things, which once were, could no more be reduced to nothing, than come from nothing." Being asked, when near death, whether he wished not to draw his last breath in Cladzomenae, his native city *, than in Lampacus? "That circumstance," said he, "is an indifferent one, and can be no object of choice; for the distance to the shades below is from every place the same." The magistrates of Lampacus desired him to signify what manner of solemnizing his memory amongst them, which they had resolved upon, would have most his approbation. "Let the anniversary of my death," answered he, "be made a play-day amongst the school-boys." It has been remarked, that no celebration of it he could have named had a chance to be so long observed, nor any festivity he could have fancied was likely to have been so cordially solemnized, as this stated provision for the recreation and joy of youthful minds. Accordingly, Diogenes Laertius takes notice, that the custom of it had been uninterruptedly continued till his time.

The Ionic school came to a conclusion with Archelaus, the disciple of Anaxagoras. Diogenes Laertius alledges it was he, not his master, who first taught the science of physics at Athens, and consequently that the transference of the school is to be referred to Archelaus's appearance in that city. This is one of the controversies amongst the learned, in which curiosity about the history of literature has been rather unnecessarily interested. The detail of the dispute makes a considerable article in the Dictionaries of Moreri and Bayle. It would be of more importance to know whether Archelaus adopted or rejected Anaxagoras's doctrine of an incorporeal and intelligent principle in the universe; or if he accounted for the generation † of the world solely upon the physical theory he is said to have held about heat and humidity. It seems that he admitted the existence of mind, but ascribed not to it the formation of the natural system. He is likewise said to have philosophised in moral subjects, and to have considered the principles of justice and equity as

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* Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 1. p. 182.
p. 28. ; De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 3.

† Stobaei Eclog. Physic. lib. 1.

founded * more in policy than in nature. His disciple Socrates, who taught another doctrine, could not therefore be much indebted to him for instruction in that science. We shall see that, by the fame which Socrates acquired, the study of physics, which had usurped the place of all other sciences in the Ionic school, and was likely to do so in that of Athens, suffered a decline, and came to be less regarded. It was time, it may be said, that such a change should take place, when it is considered that, notwithstanding the partial attachment shown to the physical philosophy, the progress in it was but superficial, and often fallacious; and that, of all theories, those respecting the production of the world, and the original constitution of the heavens and the earth, have been, and, without supernatural discovery, ever will be, altogether ambiguous and conjectural. The variations of the Ionic philosophers from one another in their physical tenets, have proved presages of the fluctuation of opinion amongst those who, in several ages, have followed them in their unsearchable tract; and, although some of these theorists have shown ingenuity, they have been either outdone by others, or the palpable defects of their systems have been exposed. To be a dogmatist, therefore, upon any general theory of physics, has not been the mark of the wisest mind. The most intelligent have been sensible, that the investigation of the first principles of natural bodies is the hardest and most dubious one in philosophy; and that, if it were possible to ascertain them, the estimate of their forces, their operations, their dependencies and connections, when combined together in a general system, becomes another obscurity, and such a one as may be pronounced impenetrable to human minds.

We may conclude the account of the philosophers of the Ionic school with observing, that all of them, from Thales, denied a vacuum in the universe; and that † this tenet was generally maintained by other physical theorists, until Leucippus and Democritus appeared. Upon the principle of a plenum, a manifest difficulty presented itself, whether the universe was held to be finite or infinite. If the first was asserted, there could surely be conceived a void space beyond it; and if the second, it was

* Diog. Laert. lib. 2.

† Stobaei Eclog. Phys. lib. 1. b. 22. p. 38.

was a perplexity, if not impossible, to imagine how local motion could take place, when no room was left for it. The *immobility* of all things being therefore considered as the consequence of the tenet of an infinite *plenum*, we shall find that these philosophers who pretended to invalidate the testimony of the senses, and the clearest decisions of reason among mankind, adhered to the theory which excluded motion, as affording a colour for their gross inferences.

In the general division of our subject, the philosophy of Pythagoras could not well be comprehended, as it had little or no connection with that which was taught in the other schools of Greece in the periods we have traced. Yet the appearance of its founder closely following the institution of the Ionic school by Thales, the account of it falls to be here introduced. It is therefore to be considered as forming a separate tract by itself, and having much more of a foreign than a Grecian original.

P A R T. II.

S E C T I O N I.

Of Pythagoras—his Travels into Egypt and other foreign Countries—his Institution of the Italic School of Philosophy,—and the peculiar Discipline taught in it.

IN the more ancient times, the Egyptian temples are said * to have contained no images or statues of the gods ; and, from Homer's silence upon the head, it may be inferred that those of Greece were not furnished with them in the time of the Trojan war. It is even to be presumed that many of the rites and ceremonies recited by him, as used in sacrifices and expiations, were introduced after that period †. It is likewise known that neither the antient Chaldeans of Assyria, nor the Magi of Persia, admitted of images, nor, for some time, of temples, for religious worship ; and that they adored, under the *expansè* of the heavens, the first or sovereign principle of all things, in the sun, or the element of fire ; while the Egyptians paid a similar veneration to that of water. The like simplicity of religion appears to have obtained among the antient nations of Italy ; and, according to Dionysius Halicarnassæus ‡, Pliny, and Plutarch, it took place in the sacred institutions of the Romans by their first King, and more especially in those of his successor. The religion of the Sabines, says Livy §, of which nation Numa Pompilius was, had much of the character of that of the *Pythagoreans* ;
and,

* Lucian de Dea Syria.
Cicero de Legibus, lib. 2. p. 345.
§ Lib. 1. p. 27. fol. edit.

† Diogen. Laert. in Prooemio ; Strabo, lib. 15. ;
‡ Antiquitat. Rom. lib. 2.

and, although it was afterwards accounted by the Romans too austere, it might well be accounted more pure and incorrupt than any other in its precepts. In its exterior forms, a principal regard was paid to composure of mind, and to a chaste adoration of the present, but *invisible* divinity. Numa *, adds Plutarch, disapproved the use of sensible images of the *deity*; “for the first cause,” said that legislator, “is not to be considered as an object of the senses; neither is he susceptible of passion; but, having no mixture of parts, he is invisible, and to be comprehended only by the mind.” It is also observed by the same author, that this sentiment of *deity* corresponded with the one delivered in the philosophy of Pythagoras.

It would however be a gross error, to imagine that Numa could have borrowed any thing from Pythagoras, who was posterior to him by two or three generations, and is reckoned † to have come into Italy, not sooner than the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, the last of the Roman kings. Not much skilled in chronology, the ancient Romans, says Cicero ‡, easily admitted of this anachronism about Pythagoras; accounting it honourable for their king to have conversed with a philosopher so celebrated for his wisdom. The Roman orator §, when copying the religious institutions delivered in Plato’s book of laws, in which that philosopher connects the regulations of Minos with the Pythagorean discipline, finds an almost entire agreement of the two with the sacred appointments of Numa. It appears, then, that rational and worthy sentiments of deity, together with suitable notions of religious worship, such as distinguished the philosophy of Pythagoras, were not unknown, even in that region where he afterwards chose to institute his school. In tracing the sources of these sentiments, we are therefore still obliged to look back to an antiquity prior to that of any Grecian poet or sage; and shall find that Pythagoras, who became most intelligent in them, was hardly deemed a Grecian philosopher, on account of his having passed the greatest part of his life in foreign climes, and received there almost the whole of his erudition and discipline.

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* In Vita Numae.

† Ibid. lib. 4. p. 163.

‡ Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 1. p. 129.

§ Ibid. de Legibus.

There are many fables, and unvouched anecdotes, with which Porphyrius, and, after him, his disciple Jamblicus, have loaded their lives of this philosopher, that are to be thrown aside, in any credible account of him that may be given *. That Pythagoras had parents, or near relations, in a condition to afford him the most liberal education, and to gratify the uncommon thirst for knowledge he soon discovered, need not be called in question. His father's name † was Mnesarchus, a person of rank in the island of Samos; although his employment was that of an engraver of seals. As Samos furnished no masters in science of more ability than the ordinary priests in the temples, he was early placed under the tuition of Pherecydes Syrus, whose literary fame has been mentioned. That he made a circuit among other professors of science in Greece and Phoenicia, previously to his voyage to Egypt, and by his studies under them, before the age of eighteen, had attained to that proficiency in knowledge ascribed to him by Jamblicus ‡, is neither reconcileable with probability nor chronology. We may indeed ask, with respect to *theology*, which afterwards made a principal part in his philosophy, where, among all his Grecian masters, he could receive it? Unless we admit that there were genuine poems of Orpheus, which taught it, and might be perused by him, he must have collected it from some obscure hint, such as that of the syllable “, inscribed on the gate of the temple of Delphos, of which Plutarch gives several explications, or extracted it from some allusions or figurative expressions in Homer, in the manner his allegorising commentators pretended to do; or penetrated into it through the veil of the Eleusinian mysteries.

It is not alledged that Pythagoras received the instruction in science that Thales could have afforded him, but only a direction from that philosopher ||, then in the decline of life, to prosecute his studies in the sacerdotal colleges of Egypt, which were the best sources of knowledge. He proceeded, accordingly, in his voyage to that country; but, although

* Cicero, De Divinatione, lib. 2. p. 296. reckons him and Plato among the authors who were wealthy.

† Diog. Laert. lib. 8. p. 487.

‡ Jamblici Vita Pythag. edit. Bibliopola Commeliano, cap. 2. et 3.

|| Archaeologiae Philosophicae, quart. edit. lib. 3. cap. 11. p. 150. Ibid. cap. 8. p. 87.

though he carried with him letters of recommendation from Polycrates, who bore the chief sway in Samos *, to Amasis the Egyptian King, they did not immediately procure him the admission to instruction which he expected. Amasis's mandate for that purpose, which he obtained, was not directly complied with by the priests. Those of Heliopolis, to whom he first applied, remitted him to their brethren of Memphis, as their seniors in office. The latter, under the same pretext, directed him to the college of Diospolis, or Thebes; the priests of which, although they did not use the same evasion, endeavoured to deter Pythagoras from insisting upon his demand, by representing to him what disagreeable austerities he would be obliged to undergo, in the course of his initiation into their mysteries. Finding, at last, that he was neither to be dissuaded nor terrified, the rigid fraternity relented, and willingly taught him what they wished not to communicate to any stranger. Perhaps the King's authoritative command was, in this case, disrelieved by the priests, who might desire to preserve entirely in their own power, and without his interposition, the privilege of admitting or rejecting such applications to them for instruction †. Upon this supposition, may be explained what Plutarch, Strabo, and other Grecian authors, say of the frequent inexorability of the priests to communicate their sciences to foreigners; especially if we add to it, that these guardians of the temples and sacred monuments might be also influenced by the motive of interest, and that they expected to be recompensed for their pains by proper presents. Pythagoras had provided ‡ three silver cups, as his gift to the three colleges he meant chiefly to attend. But, coming first with the royal mandate in his hand, he would be thought to have trusted to it alone for compliance with what he required. Others, who had not a like ability to conciliate the favour of the priests, would be exposed to repulses from them.

For the course of two and twenty years, was Pythagoras's stay in Egypt prolonged; such study did the discipline of philosophy, when extended to all its branches, require in that country, where he had

* Porphyrius de Vita.

‡ Diogen. Laert. lib. 8.

† Plut. de Iside et Osiride. Strab. lib. 17.

had to learn the Egyptian language *, the common or epistolary orthography, and the symbolic character ; or that in which the sacred books, and those of some of the sciences, were written. The use of a vulgar and of a sacred alphabet prevailed among other nations as well as the Egyptians, and which, it is well known, many of the eastern parts of the world still retain. Pythagoras's assiduity in study was aided by singular abstinence in diet, and by a disregard of all pleasures excited either by the senses or the passions, except that of *music*, the powers of which he was, perhaps †, the first who investigated *theoretically*, by endeavouring to reduce sounds to certain measures and rules. His genius also gave him to the contemplation of numbers, and to cultivate the mathematical and abstract sciences of geometry and astronomy ; in which he showed himself an able proficient, by the lessons of his Egyptian preceptors, and also an inventor of several curious theorems ‡. To extend yet more the account of his acquired knowledge, he is said to have been carried away to Babylon, amongst the captives which Cambyfes made in his expedition to Egypt, and to have remained there for twelve years ; and, during that time, to have had the benefit of theological and scientific instruction from the Chaldeans of Assyria, and the Persian magi. Here, again, chronology is perplexed, and history labours under insurmountable difficulties : For, according to the exactest computation, Cambyfes's invasion of Egypt took not place sooner than the third year of the sixty-third Olympiad ; and Pythagoras's return from his travels to Samos and Greece, is commonly fixed to the sixty-second of that aera. To patch up || this inconsistency, some throw back his birth to the forty-seventh, and others advance it to the fifty-seventh Olympiad. The former prolong, and the latter shorten his life, by more than twenty years ; so that, however the particular events of it may be transposed, they may, at least, agree with each other about the time of his death.

Although Pythagoras endured every trial of his patience, for the sake of attaining the Egyptian sciences, he could not bear the arbitrary sway
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* Diog. Laert. lib. 8. Archaeolog. ibid. Porphyrius de Vita Pythag. octav. edit. p. 185.

† Jamblicus, cap. 26.

‡ Ibid. cap. 4. p. 36.

Cicero de finib. lib. 5. p. 113.

|| Vide Stanley's lives of the philosophers.

with which Syloson, the brother of Polycrates, ruled the Samians. Finding also a great indifference among his countrymen for philosophic instruction, he quitted Samos, and visited such places of Greece as were accounted most remarkable either for religious or political institutions. In this course, his conference with Leo, the Prince of Phlius, became more memorable than any other held by him. It gave occasion to his explaining what was to be understood by the name and profession of a *philosopher*; a title which he first modestly applied to himself, instead of the more ostentatious one of *sage*, or an adept in wisdom. "You call yourself a philosopher," said Leo; "but can * you tell what is the meaning of this singular appellation?" "You may, perhaps," replied Pythagoras, "conceive its import, by only considering the spectacle we lately beheld, which was that of the Olympic games, and the concourse of people of all classes and characters to the celebration of them. We there saw the eager and anxious competitors for the prizes of victory; and observed others intent upon their projects for profit, by the sale or the exchange of their commodities. A diversity of motives and passions appeared to have drawn together, and to agitate the vast multitude: Yet a small number may be reckoned to have come to the games without any view to glory or gain, to be spectators merely of the promiscuous scene, and to observe the various motions of the actors in it. The philosopher resembles this last class of men. *Contemplation* is his object; and in it he places all the profit or pleasure he expects in human life. To look around him, and to reflect on what he has observed, and to study his own nature, and that of the universe to which he belongs, is the noble employment, and the rational pleasure of a *philosopher*."

Instead of copying either the absurd tales, or fabulous prodigies related of this philosopher by authors, who, with a credulity similar to that of his two biographers, would have him considered not simply as a man, but one of those genii, who were believed to hold a middle rank betwixt a divinity and a mortal, we shall proceed to relate the most distinguishing institutes of his school, the rules prescribed to the elevés in it,

* Cicero, Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 5. p. 176. Diogen. Laert. ibid.

it, and his peculiar manner of imparting scientific instruction to them. After narrating the fate which befel him, and the first philosophic societies reared by him in Italy, a separate view shall be taken of the whole Pythagorean system, comprehending its physical, theological, and moral theories, whether as taught by Pythagoras himself, or subsequently adopted by his most eminent disciples.

The first and most conspicuous feature of Pythagoras's school was, that in it he imitated what he saw in the foreign colleges of the learned, where the studies of religion and philosophy were enjoined; and the veil of sanctity, common to the one, was extended to the other. Although he could not in Greece appropriate them to one class of men, yet he did his utmost to make a selection of proper participants in these sublime studies. The opinion that the minds of men being various, like their bodily constitutions, the same discipline ought not to be dispensed to them all, had early obtained credit in the world. It was so much adopted by Pythagoras, that he admitted none into his school without a previous observation and trial of the temper and disposition of their minds*. "We do not," said he, "make an Apollo of every block of marble, nor a Mercury of every piece of wood." The *purgation*, as it was called of a disciple, equalled the austerity of the strictest religious initiation. The silence enjoined to the disciple, for five years, was of itself a severe probation.

The communication of knowledge to his elevés, in three several ways, by *plain speaking*, by *concealing*, and by *signifying*, was a further proof how much he adhered to the manner of instruction he had learned abroad. The first of these needs no explication. The other two were the hieroglyphic and symbolic styles, both highly esteemed in Egypt†. In conformity to one of them, he taught, for instance, that the *unite* in number denoted *deity*, or the one original generator of all things; and that *two* expressed the indefinite nature of matter, or the whole complexity of visible objects. The *quaternion*, or number *four*, was also considered as

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competing

* Aulus Gellius, lib. 1.

† Sextus Empiricus, Advers. Mathem. lib.

4. p. 104, 5, 6. Diogen. Laert. lib. vii. p. 507.

competing with the *unite*, in indicating the stability and power of the first cause. In this manner, the ideas of theology were concealed under numerical denominations. The *symbol* was likewise used to signify them; but, more generally *, to convey moral or political maxims. It consisted of a short sentence, and sometimes of only a word or two, which, according to its literal sense, was either vulgar or frivolous; but in another acceptation, which was latent, it required and merited attention and study, on account of its important meaning. Thus †, it was *symbolically* said, “*Stir not up the fire with a sword,*” which has the obvious meaning, not to use an instrument unfit for the work to be done; but when reflected upon or explained, it communicated a precept, more proper and instructive, not *to inflame anger*, or instigate passion, where it was already excited, “*Sit not down upon the bushel.*” The measure of corn of that denomination was not made for a feat; nor had it the conveniency of one, and yet it might be so used by the indolent and careless. Vulgarly taken, it might be supposed only to prohibit that practice; but its interpretation conveyed a more refined sense, that men ought not to suspend their thoughts of action and industry, on account of their having gained the present day’s provision, but be always ready for the labour, which the next would require of them. *If a temple of the gods should lie in the way of your journey*, and you were even to pass near its gates, *yet enter it not*, was rather a religious precept that needed a comment, than a symbol in its proper form. It guarded against rash intrusion into sacred places, and against offering an unpremeditated worship to the gods, and pretending to do that occasionally, which ought ever to be performed as a principal act. The symbol, beside being sometimes reduced to a single word, was also expressed by letters or figures, which the instructed Pythagorean could easily explain. It appears to have been a device, which even civilized nations had fallen upon, for signifying to others their desires and intentions, on important occasions, by some sensible representations of them, when letters and writing were little known. The symbolic signs were considered as forming

* Jamblicus *ibid.* cap. 29.

† Porphyrius de Vita, p. 199.

forming a language more emphatic than that of words *, and calculated to make a more forcible and lasting impression upon those to whom they were addressed.

It has been observed, to the honour of Orpheus, that he restrained savage men from their horrible food; which some understand to have been their devouring their vanquished enemies, and others their feeding upon the animal kind, while life yet quivered with the warm blood in their limbs. Plato † speaks of the *Orphic* diet as a prescribed abstinence from all animal food, and the use of only the vegetable productions of the earth. That Pythagoras was acquainted with, and imitated several of the religious and moral precepts of the Thracian bard, is generally admitted. The distinction betwixt clean and unclean beasts, whether for sacrifice or for common nourishment, he might have learned in Egypt, and other eastern countries. To his disciples he enjoined a total disuse of animal food, although it was not altogether observed among them. His ‡ favourite altar for religious worship was that of Apollo at Delos, who presided over births; and where life, and not death, being the object, the spilling of blood, even accidentally, was accounted a profanation. The story of his sacrificing an ox upon his discovery of the mathematical theorem known by his name, Cicero § observes to be utterly improbable. Inconsistent it was with the ideas he had formed of religion and morality; in which a rational and temperate devotion, and a humanity extended to every creature possessed of life and sensation, were conspicuous. His doctrine was, that all animated beings || here below might be reckoned in a manner of a kindred tribe. In what point of view he understood and taught the particular one of the transmigration of human souls, known in Egypt, and diffused over all the East,

* One of the Scythian Princes sent to Darius Hystaspes, when he passed the Ister with his army, a symbolic defiance, instead of a verbal one, which was that of a mouse, a frog, and a bird, tied up together with a javelin, in a bag. It intimated, that, unless the Persian soldiers could creep into holes, swim rivers, or fly through the air, they could have no success. Clemen. Alexand. Strom. mat. 5.

† De Legibus, lib. 6.
Diogen. Laert. ibid. p. 499.

‡ Philostratus in Vita Apolonis, lib. 1. cap. 2.;

§ De Natur. Deor. lib. 3. p. 253.

|| Diogen. Laert. ibid.

East, will be stated in the account to be given of the philosophy of the Italic school. Here we shall only take notice, that, in the judgment of his ablest disciples, the vulgar notion of it was not admitted by him; and also, that he by no means held the human or rational soul to be of the same nature or origin with the mere animal or sensitive one; or that the corporeal and mortal nature could be ranked in the same class with that which was pre-existent to body, and immortal.

A fiction, such as that which Homer throws out * in his story of the transmutation of Ulysses's companions into swine, by the enchantments of Circe, might be allowed to pass in Pythagoras's school, for the sake of its moral import, although not conformable to any special tenet in his philosophy; unless as it might be understood by common hearers of his discourses, who were not admitted to the knowledge of its principles. It was †, however, agreeable, both to his physical and moral doctrine, to hold forth the animals below us as constituent parts of the general system, and, on that account, respectable to us, who ought to lay aside that thirst for their blood contracted in the barbarous ages, when the wild kinds of them were many and formidable. Considering the food of man as indicating either his brutality or his humane feelings, he recommended that sort of it which was attended with no cruelty, and, by being less inflammatory, would render him temperate and mild. The sentiment itself was truly compassionate, and worthy of being touched in Orpheus's tenderest strains. No son of the muses has alluded to it without some sympathetic approbation. When recollected by the contemplative mind, it has been revered as the image and concomitant of the golden age; and, even in the indulged state and latitude of the human appetites and passions, it has still been admired. The Roman poet, a libertine as he was in principle and practice, could not take up the theme without falling ‡ into notes of relenting sensibility; so that, from

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* *Odyssæy*, lib. 10. p. 136.

† *Porphyrus de Abstinencia ab Ufu Animalium*, octav. edit. lib. 3. p. 135. et sequent.

‡ The line of "*Quid meruistis, oves, placidum pecus, inque tuendos,*" and the sequel, is hardly ever forgot by any boy who ever read it at school; and the "*O genus attonitum gelidæ formidinis mortis,*" &c. also dwells upon the memory. *Ovid. Metamorphos.* lib. 15.

a licentious Epicurean, we are apt to think him suddenly transformed into one of the primitive disciples of Pythagoras. He also considers another doctrine of this philosopher, as emancipating human minds from the fears of Hades, and the Stygian lake, but upon a very different principle from the unnatural, comfortless, and heart-freezing conception of Epicurus, that death would totally extinguish their being. This will be afterwards explained. But we proceed now to narrate the institution of the Italic school, in consequence of Pythagoras's voyage to Crotona, a Grecian city upon the Italian coast.

Colonies from Greece, beside migrating eastward to Asia minor, also took their course to the west, and planted themselves in several sea-ports of Italy and Sicily, which, in time becoming populous cities, were, with their districts, called by the general name of *Magna Graecia*. It is remarkable, that a school of philosophy was instituted in both these colonial regions, before any such literary seminary took place in the parent country. It would appear that one great motive which Pythagoras had to betake himself to the Grecian cities in Italy, was the hope, that the principles, both of their religion and policy, being of a later establishment, and less rivetted by custom than those of the original states, would admit more easily the improvements he might prescribe. Upon his arrival in the city of Crotona, the extended fame he had already acquired, sufficed to procure him the most honourable reception. People of all ranks flocked around him, and, according to Jamblicus *, were disposed to pay him a veneration beyond what was due to one in mere mortal condition. The admiration of his eloquence and wisdom, joined with that of his apparent probity and virtue, engaged the magistrates to submit to his decision their most important public resolutions. But the change of manners he introduced among the citizens was still more surprising, especially as the Crotoneates are said to have contracted various depravations of luxury. The numerous audiences he had, of both sexes, to his public lectures, gave him opportunity to display and enforce the science and practice of moral virtue †. The women laid aside their superfluous ornaments; and the men became ashamed of their effeminate

* In vita Pythag. cap. 6.

† Justin. Histor. lib. 20. Philostrat. ibid.

nate habits ; and so much was even the strict discipline appointed to his elevés in science complied with, that schools and societies for learning, in imitation of those of Crotona, were, in a short time, erected at Rhegium, Locris, Tarentum, and Metapontum, in Italy, and at Catana, and other Grecian towns on the Sicilian coast. Thus far did the *Pythagorean dreams* * hopefully proceed ; for constituting, or reforming republics upon a peculiar mixture of the principles of religion, and philosophic science.

The course of a few years was sufficient to show the fallacy of Pythagoras's project ; and how vain the imagination was that the precepts of a philosopher, or the principles of a contemplative society, could avail to repress the operation of the common passions of men, especially when exerted in free governments, where they are apt to run into the greatest excesses. If Pythagoras, as some alledge, reckoned that his seminaries of disciples could become, like the priests of Egypt, established and permanent councils of the states in which they were erected, he was surely no wise calculator of the difference of *political meridians*, and of the varying characters of nations. But in this, it is presumable there was much more of philosophic enthusiasm than of political design. One man's disgust was only required to subvert all the labours of the philosopher, and that of his followers, and to involve him and them in a general ruin. As the number of the Pythagoreans increased, they became the majority in the senate of Crotona, and attained the chief administration of public affairs. For some time this created no jealousy, but rather gave the utmost satisfaction †. Cylon, however, a person of rank and opulence in the city, resenting Pythagoras's refusal to admit him into his school, upon the footing of an initiated disciple, exerted all his endeavours to awake the sleeping spirit of faction. He was soon successful in attaching to his party all those who were, like himself, dissipated in their manners. He represented the Pythagorean societies as disguised instruments of political domination, and that their assumed authority in the government of Crotona, fully verified this accusation.

Ignorance

* The scheme may be reckoned among the *Somnia Pythagorea*, mentioned by Horace.

† Jamblicus, cap. 25. p. 207.

Ignorance in the multitude, and jealousy in others, rendered it credible. The silent demeanour of the Pythagoreans, their secrecy, the *symbol*, or *cypher*, intelligible only among themselves, were deemed indubitable proofs of its truth. Various are the accounts of the measures pursued by Cylon, and his associates, for overthrowing the sect. But the issue was, that, taking advantage of the popular odium now excited, a scheme was laid for their destruction, by assaulting the persons of the principal men among them. While convened in the public hall, or, as some say, in the house of Milo, the famous wrestler, they were surrounded; and the edifice being set on fire, all who were present, except Archippus and Lyfis, fell victims to the flames, or to the swords of their enemies. The number of the sufferers is not agreed upon; while some reckon them forty, and others a great many more. Pythagoras himself, before the fatal event, had gone to Metapontum, where concern, added to the infirmity of his age, soon put an end to his life. The same outrageous jealousy, which arose in Crotona, spread through the other Italian cities and towns, into which the Pythagorean fraternities had been introduced. Rhegium only afforded a protection for the refugees from Crotona. In other places, they were generally subjected to forfeitures of their estates, or to exilements.

To consider this catastrophe of the Pythagoreans as the consequence of their aspiring to civil power; and to conceive their founder to have been one who entertained the deep design of subjecting, by means of his religious and philosophic discipline, the cities and states of the *Magna Graecia*, to the controul and jurisdiction of his sect, is an opinion unauthorized by the judgment of antiquity, which vouches no less for the simplicity, candour, and disinterested virtue, of the Pythagorean disciples, than for the extent of their theological wisdom, or political knowledge. Pythagoras himself was, perhaps, in no principle maintained by him so much an enthusiast, as in that of his hatred of political tyranny, and zeal for equality among the citizens in every community. He connected his detestation of the opposite principle with the idea of injustice, when understood in a religious as well as in a moral sense, to imply an usurpation of power contrary to the will of the gods, and which they had assigned to no individuals. It was the chief labour

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of his life to oppose arbitrary rule * ; as the tyrant of Centoripa is said, in consequence of his remonstrances, to have resigned his oppressive power, so the cruel Phalaris is reckoned to have owed his death to his instigations. His political doctrines were not, like his philosophical ones, involved in mystery, but openly declared, and well known. Various cities and communities, by the just and equal laws he promoted amongst them, bore testimony, that not the narrow view or ambition of throwing civil authority into the hands of his sect, but the noble one of reducing the science of government to its truest principles, and exemplifying wise and equitable legislation, animated all his endeavours † : Hence he is called by Cicero the *greatest ornament* of ancient Italy, on account of the civil institutions, and ingenious arts, communicated by him ; and the disciples trained up in the knowledge of his political maxims ‡, such as Zaleucus of Locris, and Charondas of Thurium, are not known to have assumed power, or dealt in intrigues, even where every opportunity was given them, but to have derived the signal fame that followed them, from the honest and worthy exertions they made for establishing civil concord and harmony in the states they were called to reform. To have the capacity of performing this service to mankind, was reckoned, in the Pythagorean school, the highest of all worldly honours.

The decisive sentence of the *ipse dixit* has been often quoted, to the reproach of Pythagoras ||, as a teacher of philosophy, and to the ridicule of his school ; and, if understood according to the common acceptation, nothing can be imagined more absurd. Perhaps there may be a mistake in supposing that it implied an implicit submission to every dictate of Pythagoras. We may venture to say, farther, that it is morally improbable, in the highest degree, that such disciples as Archytas of Tarentum, Philolaus, Timaeus of Locris, Ocellus Lucanus, Alcmaeon, Lyfis, the preceptor of Epaminondas, men of the most distinguished abilities in science, and whose literary works testified their genius, could ever admit Pythagoras's assertion, or that of any philosopher, in the room of reason

* Jamblic. cap. 32.

† Diogen. Laert. ibid. p. 501.

‡ Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 5.

|| Cicer. de Natur. Deor. lib. 1. p. 192.

reason itself, and acquiesce in it as the *ultimatum* of human knowledge *. It appears, indeed, that the *ipse dixit*, or the precept, without the reason being annexed to it, was directed to those called *Acoustics*, or the croud of auditors, and the undisciplined, who attended his school. During the five years of the *noviciate* of the disciples, it also had its currency amongst them. But, if we suppose that it was extended to the fully instructed, it is likely to have been only with a particular view of terminating disputes, and preserving in the sect an apparent unanimity of sentiments. In that age, the *dialectic*, as it was afterwards called, or a method of conducting any argument with accuracy, and in such a manner as to avoid a false conclusion, unless what natural good sense might suggest to that purpose, was unstudied, and made no part of erudition or science. The Pythagorean disciples, sensible how readily they might be misled, or mislead others, in various disputable questions, would find it the properest remedy against vague and fallacious argumentation, and generally the best termination of their reasoning, to appeal to some noted axiom, or acknowledged principle, in the doctrine of their master. Considered in this light, the *ipse dixit* was no such gross absurdity as it is commonly represented.

The distinction which Pythagoras chose to make amongst his disciples, according to the judgment he could form of their genius and capacities, instead of being a political measure, calculated to strengthen his sect, had a direct tendency to weaken and infringe its union. It rendered his school a breed of philosophers, who cultivated separate branches of science †. Some were *theologists*, dedicated chiefly to religious studies; some were *politicians*, conversant in the theory of legislation and civil government; and others *mathematicians*, who applied themselves to geometry and astronomy. Upon none was imposed, and from none was exacted, any other task or performance, but that for which their natural faculties and inclinations appeared to qualify them ‡. One party of them was closely united to the college; and, having their estates thrown

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* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*
 Photii. Bibliotheca, codice 249. Holsteni Interprete.

† De vita Pythag. autor. incertus. Ex
 ‡ Porphy. de vita, p. 189. et observat. ad vitam.

into the common stock, used the diet, and lived according to the forms prescribed in the society. Another class was allowed to retain their fortunes, and to dwell at home, under the profession of being of the sect, but tied to less strict rules of fellowship. These two orders were distinguished from each other by the names of *Pythagoreans* and *Pythagorites*, or the genuine disciples, and their imitators. The distinction was triple, when it included foreigners.

According to Pythagoras's doctrine, morals and politics formed one system, and were reducible to the same principles. As his treatises on the latter, which are said to have been large, are not transmitted, we can form no distinct judgment how he reconciled the duties required of his disciples in their private capacity, which, in several respects, were singular, and out of the tract of common life, with such as might be exacted of them, as members of civil government. Here we allude not to the precepts about diet and abstinence, but take into view their sense and practice of certain moral duties, when they came in competition with others that might be accounted of superior obligation. A Pythagorean, it appears, under promise to render any personal service to one of his fraternity, although not very important, reckoned himself indispensibly bound to perform it, in the precise manner and time he had engaged. Arrested by his word given, he could not turn aside to do any other office, which his country or his neighbours might request of him, if that demand put him out of the way of acquitting himself of his promise *. Lysis meets his friend Euryphamus going to worship in the temple of Juno, and is asked by him to wait at the gate, until he had performed his adoration, and should return to him. He promises to do so. Wrapt up in some deep meditation, Euryphamus forgets the appointment he had made, and departs by another entry. In expectation of his appearance, Lysis had taken his seat upon a stone bench, and remained there all the hours of the day, and through those of the night. His name being accidentally mentioned next morning, in the presence of Euryphamus, the interview with him was recollected by the latter. He repairs to the temple, and finds him there, keeping his station, and still waiting

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

waiting his return with all composure. In this instance, there was testified, perhaps, more respect to a friend, and a confidence in his punctuality, than a sense of strict obligation. But if it was a Pythagorean maxim to put an ordinary and accidental promise upon an equality with the engagement of an oath, which is alledged to have been the case, it must be looked upon as a *hyperbole* in morals, and to have inferred various improprieties in conduct. An oath or vow was either a deliberate, voluntary, and public act of religion, or was pronounced upon some extraordinary occasion, and such as was sufficient to introduce it. All that was accounted sacred among men was called to witness the sincerity of it; and therefore, although a person swore to his own hurt, he was not to think himself at liberty to retract. It would seldom interfere with any call to public or private duty; or, if it did, its solemnity would make it publicly known. But promises among friends are often requested and granted upon slight occasions, and with no reserve or ceremony. Unless, then, the Pythagoreans be supposed to have been as scrupulous in giving promises as they were religiously strict in the observance of them, they must have been frequently thrown into disagreeable situations, and committed errors in moral behaviour, more culpable than those incurred in other societies, where a proper distinction was made with respect to the obligation of the greater and lesser moralities.

There are other precepts of a frivolous kind imputed to Pythagoras, or delivered as articles of his moral discipline, which may be reckoned more worthy of the *Pythagorites*, or *mimics*, of his school, than of the true Pythagoreans. We can, indeed, discover no foundation for them in those fragments which bear the names of some of his earliest disciples, and appear to be genuine reliëts of their writings: Nor does Hierocles, in his commentary on the *Golden Verses*, give ground to suppose that such *embrios* of religious or moral doctrine had credit amongst the more intelligent of the sect. Some of them, as we may understand from Porphyry, were no more than prescriptions for health, or for the rendering the body more freely subservient to the energies of the mind. The enjoined abstinence from *beans* most probably proceeded from no other reason, notwithstanding the various fictions reported with respect to it. Venerated as the name of Pythagoras was among his disciples, and its
authority

authority required for every species of doctrine, yet this did not prevent various mistakes and corruptions of it from taking place *. It is not agreed among antient authors, whether any philosophic treatises he had written were preserved after his death; and, by several of them, it is observed that he committed nothing to writing. But, if it should be allowed that there were extant such commentaries of his as Diogenes Laertius † mentions, upon the authority of Heraclitus, the philosopher, who, in his books, gave the titles of them, it seems that they had been lost at an early period. Beside uncommon accidents to which they were liable from the catastrophe of his followers, Porphyry takes notice of its ‡ being an unfavourable circumstance that they were written in the Doric dialect, which had a peculiar obscurity; and that transcripts of them into other dialects were made by those who were not true Pythagoricks. Hence ensued a misapprehension of many of his precepts, and a ridicule of their perverted meaning §. The poet Epicharmus, who was only a common hearer of his public discourses, and not of his college, took the liberty to descant, in sportful verse, upon some of the most abstruse points of his philosophy.

It is alledged, and with probability, that, at first, every literary composition, by any of the disciples of Pythagoras's school, had his name prefixed to it: But this usage had been soon laid aside, most likely on account of the abuse to which it was turned. Although antiquity has transmitted his golden verses as the most genuine summary of his moral doctrines, they are evidently not of his composition. Some of the verses were probably taken from his mouth ||, but the greater part appear to be recollected sentences, turned into numbers by Lyfis or Philolaus, or them both; who, in contradiction to fictitious or faulty complements of their master's precepts, might find it necessary to publish a just abstract of them **. From the latter of them came that *Collect* of Pythagoras's philosophy which was most esteemed, and that Plato thought well purchased for forty *minae*. The theory of the sciences, divine and human, taught

* Vide Lucian, Plutarch, Cicero.

† Ibid. in Vita.

‡ De Vita Pythag. p. 205. et seq.

§ Jamblicus in capit. ult.

|| Diogen. Laert. in Vita Philolai, lib. 5.

** Porph. de Vita Pythag. p. 208.

taught by this celebrated philosopher, was further illustrated by the publications of Timaeus of Locrtis, Ocellus Lucanus, Archytas, and other eminent disciples of his Italic school.

Notwithstanding the great subversion of the Pythagorean schools that has been mentioned, still some scattered vestiges of them were preserved. In these, both teachers and disciples were found, who supported the reputation, although they could not revive the splendour, of their sect. The unenvied privacy to which they were reduced, joined to the virtuous simplicity of their manners, contributed to their duration; and *, according to Diogenes Laertius, we must reckon nineteen generations from Pythagoras, until his retainers totally disappeared, or were absorbed in other sects, whose principles bore some analogy to their own. While a remnant of them subsisted, they were beheld with veneration, like the sequestered priests of some once famous, but forsaken shrine. "At this day," says Isocrates, "we more admire a Pythagorean in his silence, than a person who discourses in the most eloquent manner." Although contemplative and studious, a true Pythagorean was attentive, and feelingly alive to every act of duty, and generous service, to all of his tribe. The tie of friendship amongst individuals of the sect, was equal to every proof of its constancy. Damon † and Pythias contended which of them should die in place of the other. In youth, the studies, the exercises, and amusements of the *friends* were the same, and tallied through every period of age. An indissoluble sympathy was the consequence, which ceased not altogether in death. The image of the departed friend was sought for, and contemplated, as far as might be, in some living character. The provisions made for the general benefit of the sect, testified not only the prevalence of friendly affections, but of the warmest benevolence amongst its members. The aged and infirm had comfortable recesses assigned them. The credit of the fraternity served the accidental necessities of every individual; and his wilful secession from it, or the breach of his sacred engagements, could only deprive him of these privileges. In this case, if he had contributed any thing

* In Vita Pythag. ad finem.
p. 234.

† Valerius Maxim. lib. 4. quart. edit.

thing to the public stock, it was returned to him; but his alienation was considered as a sad walk into the grave. His *moral* death was deplored; and his obsequies were solemnly performed, as of one more *wofully* dead, than he who only falls a corporeal victim to mortality.

So far we have attempted to trace, not what may be called *a life* of Pythagoras, which, perhaps, never was, and now cannot be compiled without an intermixture of fables or vague conjectures. An essay only has been made, to give the outlines of his genius and character, and to join with them some explications of the discipline of his school, and of particular tenets of his philosophy, which otherwise might have been omitted, and could not, without frequent and improper digressions, be introduced into the following general dissertations on the principles, theological and moral, which not only distinguished the Pythagorean sect, but were partly ingrafted into the systems of the most admired philosophers in the academies of Athens.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Preliminary reasoning of the Pythagoreans.—Their argument for the Incorporeal Nature being the Original Principle in the Universe ;—and why they Philosophised by Numbers.—Views of Theories in Theology and Morals.

TWO natures of things, the incorporeal and corporeal, were held by the Pythagoreans as together constituting the universe. They, therefore, defined philosophy to be the science of things divine and human, or of objects intelligible by the mind, and of those perceived by the senses. In discussing the question, into which of these two component parts of the universe, its principle might, most rationally, be resolved, they held it to be an evident truth, *that bodies could never be the principle of bodies.* All of them, said they, apparent to us, are compounded ; and, therefore, in none of them is to be discerned a first principle. To alledge, that the minute particles of bodies, although they escape the senses, may have the form of principles, is a vague assertion, and, when considered, leads to no conclusion. For, if we suppose any species of body to be analysed, and its smallest particles to be reduced into those which are smaller ; yet, whether these be called atoms, or invisible quantities, we can still conceive a further diminution of them, and that to proceed in an endless series. There is, therefore, no principle of originality either apparent or conceivable in bodies ; and those who insist upon it, are only right in saying, that it is unapparent and obscure. But they ought to go further, in order to discover the truth, and acknowledge, that, if such a principle obtains in the universe, it is to be found in the incorporeal nature, or that genus of being which is comprehended only by the mind ; otherwise it must be concluded, that

the world is without a principle *. It is added by Sextus Empiricus, who states the Pythagorean argument at greater length, that Epicurus, who is known to have held the eternity of atoms, and denied all incorporeal substance, was obliged to confess, that we acquire the idea of body, by combining in our minds its sensible qualities of extension, figure, and solidity; without which conception it could be no intelligible thing. But, if a mental idea of body necessarily precedes the knowledge of body, the incorporeal and intelligent nature must be inferred to have essence prior to the corporeal and unintelligent †; and as bodies, apparent and sensible, are constituted of those which are unapparent, so the intelligible ideas of them must have their original in beings incorporeal, and possessed of intelligence; which are, therefore, to be concluded the only principles of things in the world.

In attempting to give any rational account of the constitution of the world, whether it be supposed to have been eternal, or to have been generated, all philosophers have found it necessary to form certain conceptions of the substances that do exist, and to express, in the most perspicuous manner they can, their ideas of them. Some held all substances to be no more than an assemblage of what others called the qualities of bodies, and therefore contented themselves with taking only a collective view of these qualities ‡; while the Pythagoreans thought it more philosophical to consider them separately by themselves, as objects intelligible to the mind. Thus, said they, the extension of body may be conceived

* Sext. Empir. Advers. Mathem. in cap. de Numero, lib. 9. p. 425. fol. edit.

† Notwithstanding the above argument used by the disciples of the Pythagorean school, it must be admitted, that they generally supposed matter unformed, which was not body, to have been eternal, or, at least, pre-existent in time to the constitution of the world. That this was their hypothesis, appears from the account to be given of the formation of the world, according to Timaeus Locrus; and it must be owned to have been the common delusion of the ancient philosophers. We call it a *delusion*; because no idea can be conceived of matter without any form; nor is it explained by them in any other way, but by saying what it was not, and making it a *chimera*, void of all properties, and yet so far qualified as to be the subject of them.

‡ Porphyrius in Vita Pythag. p. 202.

ceived without its figure, and both these properties separate from its weight. A line, a superficies, a solid, are surely different conceptions, although all of them be found together in the dimension of body. Yet each of them comes under the predicament of numbers. A line, as considered by mathematicians, consists of several points; and its length is determined by the number of them. A superficies is composed of several lines, and a solid of several surfaces*. *Number*, therefore, is a primary *idea*, antecedent even to that of a conceivable substance, or the constituent properties of body. It is ever occurring to the mind; for each idea is one, and, when joined to another, it is more. As the Pythagoreans held incorporeals, or intelligibles, to be the principles of all things, they reckoned that their essential differences could not be so distinctly and philosophically expressed in any language, as in that of numbers: For how, said they, is the first principle of the universe understood, in its identity and individuality, to be represented to the mind with a propriety equal to what the *monad* holds forth; and, if alterity be found in nature, the duad, as it may be called, is a no less expressive epithet, when taken not according to the common conception of the arithmetical number two, consisting of one, and one, but of one, and another, or what is indefinite; and therefore not properly number, but its source or beginning. In this manner, they reckoned the clearest distinction was made between the incorporeal and indivisible first cause, and passive matter, the subject of its operation; which being divisible and alterable, had the capacity of producing the triad, the first distinct numerical idea, or quantity ascertained, and particularly terminated, having a beginning, a middle, and an end. It may be asserted, therefore, that Pythagoras, and his immediate successors, by no means entertained the visionary notions of a physical and generative power in numbers, which their followers, in a subsequent age, absurdly adopted, to the shame of philosophy; and that the former insisted upon the science of numbers only as subservient to the abstract and intellectual contemplation of the principles of things, which they maintained to be incorporeal, and in conjunction with body, to be susceptible of multitude and

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magnitude,

* Porphyrius in Vita Pythag. lib. 4. p. 104. 105.

magnitude, identity, and diversity, equality and inequality. It has been reported, says Theano, as cited by Stobaeus, by many of the Greeks, that Pythagoras taught that numbers were * principles; but his doctrine was, not that things originated from them, but according to them. The treating philosophical subjects according to mathematical ideas, and particularly those of arithmetic, was not so much exploded even in Aristotle's † time; but that he, who overspread the whole ground of philosophy with metaphysical and logical terms, chose to explain the four faculties of the soul in the Pythagoric manner. The understanding, says he, corresponds to the unite, knowledge to the number two, opinion to three, or the triangular superficies, and sense to the quaternion, or solid figure. The idea annexed by the Pythagoreans to the quaternion, was, however, a very different one. The author of the Golden verses swears by his master Pythagoras, who had transmitted to his disciples ‡ the knowledge of the *Tetractys*, which is the source of nature, ever flowing on in generation. Hierocles, in his commentary upon the verses, understands by the mystic number four, the Deity himself, the fountain of everlasting order in the world. But in what sense is he the quaternion? This, adds he, must be learned from the sacred book, ascribed to Pythagoras, in which the Deity is held forth as the *number of numbers*. He then descants upon the perfection of the unite, as the principle of all the numbers, and having the powers of them all; and observes further, that the whole power of the Decad, which is the finite interval of number, was first discoverable in the four, which, taken together with the three numbers antecedent to it, made up ten. After such speculations on the virtue and efficacy of the quaternion, he concludes it to bind together all beings, the natural elements and seasons, the ages of human life, and of human societies. It is subjoined, that the intelligent God is, after this manner, the cause of the sensible one, or the animated world. By all this, if any thing be intelligible, we may understand it to be an essay

* Stobaei Eclog. Phys. lib. 1. p. 27. Theano was Pythagoras's spouse, who took the government of the school upon his death, and wrote some philosophic treatises, which remained.

† Arist. de Anima, lib. 1. cap. 2.
cum Hieroclis Comment.

‡ Aurea Car. vers. lin. 47. 48.

say on the mysterious Theurgy, as it was called, or the operation of the Deity in the fabric of the heavens and the earth, and on the subject of which, we have, in the fragment of Timaeus Locrus *, the following dissertation, together with other principles of the Pythagorean philosophy.

There were two causes of all things, mind and necessity; the one, of such as are done with reason, and the other, of those which are produced by power, and according to the capacity of bodies. The principle of the fair, and the best things in the world, is called God; whilst other adventitious causes are to be referred to necessity. Before the generation of the world, form, or the idea of it, and matter void of shape, but susceptible of it, coexisted with God, who wise, as well as good, saw what was to be done in order to produce a regular system of things. He imparted that form to the mass of matter, which gave it a definite constitution, and rendered it one whole, and perfect; being uniform, and also most comprehensive, from its rotundity, and from its circular motions, adapted to that perpetual duration for which it was designed by him. For he who made it fair, not after the model of any thing done before, but according to his own intelligible idea, willed that it should be so permanent, as to be dissolvable by no other cause but that of his own volition. As, therefore, a good parent can have no motive or inducement to destroy what has been procreated by him, especially when it bears the stamp of pulchritude upon it, the world remains, as it was formed by its maker, unaltered, and exempted from change. The more it may be reckoned to have this perfection, as it was endowed with life, and the infusion of an all-informing and intelligent soul; a soul so tempered, as to consist of idea individual, or unity, and dividual essence, or number. Hence the world is found to contain two different powers, or principles of motion, which may be distinguished by the names of *the same*, and *of another*; the first being constant, and the second variable. The conjoining these two powers, whether in the soul of the world, or in the visible creation, was an intricate operation; but effectuated according to the powers of harmonic numbers. Here, then, the wide step was made
into

* Timaeus Locrus de Anima Mundi. In Opusculis Mythol. Physic. Ethic. Octav. edit. Amstelodami, p. 544.

into philosophy, in the mystic style that has been exemplified, and which threw such obscurity upon the doctrine of the Pythagorean schools, that the inscription upon the statue of the Egyptian Isis, or Minerva, wrapt around with a thick shroud, was said to become them, "who can penetrate through my veil."

Resigning, therefore, the investigation of the numerical faculties to those who can be amused with them, we shall only here subjoin, from the same author, so much of his account of the system of the world as may serve to introduce that of Plato, afterwards to be given, which is no more than an enlarged view of the same principles.

The soul of the material world, which is its greatest ornament, must be conceived to have had all its endowments prior to its infusion into a subject void of all qualities. For, whatever in the universe is more adorned, and more eminently qualified than another, must be concluded to be the more ancient, and to have the precedence in originality. Time, indeed, is but coeval with the generated world; yet in such a manner, that it may be conceived to be the image of that time ungenerated, which is called *eternity*. As the constitution of the world, furnished with an enlivening soul, demonstrated the operation of its parent and founder, so the generation of animals, subject to mortality, but capable of continuing their species, testified a similarity of design, and a completion of like admirable workmanship. The procreation and custody of all living substances, under the law of mortality, was, indeed, committed to Nature; who, as the appointed distributor and nourisher of animal life, performs her work in every region of *alterity*; making souls flow into bodies, some from the sun and moon, and others from the wandering stars; but her power stops at that which, in the human composition, possesses identity, and which being the essence of the rational part, remains the same as it was given by the supreme ruler of the world, to be the type and signature of wisdom to those of the human race, who, along with this good destiny, make it the study of their life how to use it aright.

In the mystical detail of the origin of all rational souls, such as the human, their existence before their connection with bodies, is evidently delivered as a Pythagorean doctrine. They are represented, not as generated

rated by Nature, but as individual portions of the intelligent soul of the world, which being contempered with the elementary essences, were consigned to Nature's charge for distribution into mortal bodies, and coalition with them. Therefore they were, in a manner, coeval with their original, and the production of the world; which, according to this philosophy, beside human souls, contained a multiplicity of other intelligencies conversant with bodies, and acting in the celestial and terrestrial spheres, in various capacities, and with the several denominations of heroes and demons; the earth being accounted the residence of certain inferior divinities, as well as of men. Evident it is, that the immortality of human souls could be inferred, by necessary consequence, from the doctrine of their pre-existence; and that the argument with respect to this important point, instead of a prolix discussion, might be reduced to this short state: Whatever substances had co-existed with the world, and were not generated from any adventitious forms, or accidents of body, could not be affected by corporeal vicissitudes, and corruptibility; but the rational souls of men are such substances; therefore they are not subject to corruption with the body, but immortal.

The doctrine of the transmigration of human souls into the bodies of other animals, by way of penal suffering, and correction for their vices, is mentioned by Timaeus Locrus, not as a tenet of the Pythagorean philosophy, adapted to rational minds, but a fictitious one, calculated to strike the gross, and otherwise indocile minds of the multitude. He ranks it with the fables of Homer; which having a religious or moral tendency, might be reckoned allowable deceptions, and properly enough employed to deter the impious and profligate from their lawless and pernicious practices. This, says he, is no more than what is often done by the physician in his healing art. Diseases which yield not to gentle, and what may be called more salubrious remedies, are expelled by those which are more effectual, but severe and violent. Therefore, to impress truth, which is the sanity of the soul, upon certain impenetrable minds, they must be told of strange punishments abiding them, such as the transmigration of their souls from one animal body into another, in which every one shall meet the chastisement due to his depravation. But, with respect to the suffering of souls, there can, in reality, be no other

other than what Nemestis, in adequate judgment of their demerit, has determined for them; and which, in the second circuit, or the return of the soul into the regions of air *, the furies, and other terrestrial demons, the inspectors of human affairs, are impowered to inflict; having this charge from the supreme God, the disposer of all things. We also find in Hierocles's commentary †, a similar disapprobation of the Metempsychosis, which is declared to be a mistaken and irrational opinion, implying a degradation of the superior nature into the inferior, which the order of the universe forbids; and that can be understood only in a metaphorical sense, when vice is said to debase man to the brutal condition.

The author last mentioned has also given, in the explanation of his text, the Pythagorean doctrine with regard to the future felicity of those souls which have adorned themselves with virtue and truth, and thus completed their purification from corporeal passions. It amounts to a kind of deification. Liberated from the body, says he, the enlightened and purified soul shall become an immortal god, no more obnoxious to death or corruption. But its elevation to divinity was to be understood in a limited sense, and in connection with other points of the Pythagorean theology. It was a principle in it, *that species does not coincide with species*; but every distinct nature remains under its peculiar law. Thus, in the three fixed orders of beings, the immortal gods, the heroes by nature, and the terrestrial demons, together with human souls, the perfection of each of them is not placed in the change of its essence, or in its transmutation into a state of being superior to that which it occupies, but in the proportional and comparative likeness which all of them, in their several ranks, bear to the supreme God. In the first of them, this resemblance was said to be of constant duration, always the same in degree; in the second, to be no less perpetual, but not ever in equal measure; and, in the third, to have neither constancy in the one way, nor invariability in the other. Yet the human soul was to be considered as having attained a deified condition, when, in conjunction with its subtile vehicle, it mounted to its pure aetherial place, superior to that of
terrestrial

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 5.

† Hierocles Comment. in Vers. 52. 53.

terrestrial and perishable bodies; and from thence never to descend again to the sphere of mortality and corruption. It is in allusion to this retreat of purified souls, according to the Pythagorean principle, into the regions of aether, supposed to be below the celestial spheres, but above the sublunary one, that the poets * sing of their taking flight from hence, and being reunited, each of them to its proper star; which, in more philosophical language, was expressed, by their recovering their primaeval state, being resolved into their original principle, and harmonising with the soul of the world.

We enter not into a more particular account of the sphere of the *triple world*, as it was called, and which the Pythagoreans distinguished by the names of the inferior, superior, and supreme. The explication which ancient authors give of this arrangement of the universe, is marked with obscurity, and a considerable diversity of opinion. Even the terms they employ in describing it are varied, according to the indistinct conceptions they had of a theory so dark and abstruse. Yet, before concluding the subject, it is proper that one remark should be added to what has been said of the three orders of intelligent and rational being found in the universe. Among them, it seems, of the same order, and who possessed the same essence, it was imagined that some natural distinction took place, so as to infer subordinate degrees of virtue and excellence, according to the higher or lower places in the celestial sphere, assigned them for habitation, by the will of the Deity. Hence, we find Hierocles asserting, that, in the first of these classes, as well as in the other two, some of those he styles immortal Gods were more, and some less, divine than others †. From this doctrine we may trace the introduction of those fantastic speculations about the moral attributes and qualities of these divinities, their agency in the globes and stars of heaven, and the influence they were supposed to derive, to the sublunary and terrestrial world, which, by the later Pythagoreans, were carried into all the abfur-

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dities

* Virgil, who in several passages alludes to the Pythagorean philosophy, has, in his Georgics, the verse well known to every reader of the classics:

Nec morti esse locum, sed viva volare,
Sideris in numerum.

† Hieroclis Comment. V. 1. cap. 1.

dities of judicial astrology and divination. The vestiges of these and other corruptions of this philosophy, which was early propagated through the eastern nations, are observable among them to this day. But, in whatever manner they explained what they called the *condition*, *chorus*, and *order*, that obtained in the fixed stars, and in the seven planets, they distinguished from them the super-etherial or supreme world, as that which comprehended them and all other things within itself; having the essence of sempiternity, and being replete with all principles, the sum of which was found in one divine mind. Without reference to time or place, without distinction of its genus, it could not be properly called by any name, unless that of the all-governing throne of the Deity was applicable to it. But this much may suffice as a sketch of the theory of the world as it was conceived by the Pythagoreans, and which we will find resumed and insisted upon, at greater length, in the account of the Platonic philosophy. The general principles of the ethical, or what was called the practical part of the Pythagorean system, come now to be delineated.

All philosophy, at first, and for a course of time, was comprehended under the general name of Physics, which has been since more fully expressed by the compound word Physico-theology. Until about Socrates's age, there was no division of it into physics, properly so called, and dialectic, and ethics. Theology and morals were generally treated under one head; and, in the Pythagorean school, they were not distinguished further, than as the one was considered to be the foundation of the other. Piety and the worship of the gods was taught as the fundamental principle of moral discipline. But it may be reckoned the peculiarity of this philosophy, not only that the precept was at first given without the reason of it, but that a certain degree of moral and virtuous practice was required of the disciple, before he was deemed qualified to understand or to relish theoretical principles, relative to the general nature and constitution of things, and productive of wisdom and mental improvement, not human only, but divine *. For as the blemished eye, says Hierocles, or one accidentally stained, endures not, until it be cleansed,

* Hierocles in Proœmio ad Aur. Carm.

cleansed, the view of bright objects, so neither does the soul, which has not the purification of virtue, behold with steadiness the beauty and splendour of truth.

Upon this axiom, the philosophy of human life, or the moral discipline of man, was reduced by the Pythagoreans into two parts, the *purifying* and the *perfective* one. By the first was understood the delivery of the soul from corporeal impurities; by the second, its advancement to conformity to the great original, which is the divine image. In the scale of beings, when an ascent is to be made by individuals of one class of them, smaller things must precede the greater. We must first be men, and then divinities. The civil virtues known and practised, stamp upon us the former character; but science and contemplation assimilate us to the latter*. Nature has made the human body such an instrument, that it may be accommodated to different kinds of life; yet the habits it most contracts serve to discover that temper of the soul which is most predominant, and may be reckoned the openings of its propensities to the practice either of virtue or vice.

The analogy that may be traced between the powers of the body in the best condition, and the moral faculties of the soul, is most remarkable; and the correspondence of the one to the other is so manifest, that the great lines of the virtues may be said to have their similitudes in the bodily accomplishments. In this comparative view, the virtue of temperance is similar to health, prudence to acuteness of sense, fortitude to vigour, and justice to the beauty and symmetry of the whole body. It is therefore a primary dictate in ethical philosophy, that the order instituted by nature in the corporeal part of the human constitution has a reference and a connection with that suitable to the mind, and that the perfection of both, and the means of promoting it, are alike and harmonious†. The seeds of virtue, as incitements to acquire this perfection, are indeed imparted by nature; but neither the middle nor the end of the necessary progression is attainable without labour and diligent study. Hence the helps to advancement are to be sought after; and the same prudence which discovers the usefulness of exercise and medicine to the

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body,

* Timaeus Loc. Opuscul. ibid. p. 564.

† Ibid.

body, points out the necessity and benefit of philosophical instruction and discipline to the soul. To allay anger, and abate vehement desire, to liberate the soul from the turbulence of passion, is no less proper and advantageous, than to keep the body cool, to preserve the equal temperance of the blood, and to expel the humours which are pernicious to the animal frame. By what method the latter purpose may be accomplished, belongs to that branch of practical science to show, which relates to diet and medicine, and may be called the Therapeutic.

Dispositions to good or ill, to virtue or vice, arise not only from indulged habits, but also are derived to us from our parents, and the elements of which we are composed; at least, the depravities or defects found in either of these have their effect upon us. But the ills that are in nature, of whatever kind they be, have their mitigations or their remedies; and the means to be used for the sanity of the body are not more ascertained, nor more efficacious, than what true philosophy prescribes for the human soul. To understand what aliment or medicine may best support or relieve the one, or what rule of reason or prudence may prove beneficial to the other, the constitution of both must be studied with attention. If we inquire into that of the latter *, we shall find it to consist of three parts; reason, irascible passion, and cupidity. Reason has subjected to it knowledge; passion, the bravery of strength; cupidity, appetite. When these three are brought to coalesce, and be at one with each other, virtue and concord are produced in the soul. But, if their motions be incoherent and tumultuary, vice and discord are necessarily generated. Since by virtue is generally understood that which perfects any thing in its kind, or raises it to the highest pitch of excellence, human virtue † must be reckoned, and defined to be the perfection of man's nature. But this perfection is unattainable, unless the mind, or rational faculty of the soul, govern that which is void of reason; for, by the one we are enabled to judge of the nature of objects, and consider their effects; while the other subjects us to the power of every impelling and blind appetite or passion. The dominion of the
first

* Fragmenta Pythag. ex Theage in Opusculis Mythol. ibid. p. 681.; Maximus Tyrius Dissert. 8. octav. edit. p. 66.

† Erag. ex Thurio Opusc. ibid. p. 689.

first tends to produce tolerance and continence *, without which, neither the labour necessary in human life can be sustained, nor the good of which it is susceptible procured. By its influence, the gratification of appetite is moderated, cupidity is turned into temperance, and the impulse of passion into fortitude; and that composure of the jarring parts of the human constitution † takes place, which is the result of justice, or the disposing of all of them in their due proportions.

When the term Justice is used in this peculiar sense, it is to be understood as signifying a branch of that supreme law of reason, which, extending through all the constituent parts of the universe, combines them together as a whole; while to each particular part its proper place and function are assigned. By it, whatsoever is nobler and better in its properties ‡ and attributes has the ascendancy above that which is of inferior and meaner qualities. That which moves of itself is preferred to that which is moved; that which constantly acts, to what is ever acted upon; and that which is divine and eternal, to what is human and created. Therefore, as God bears rule in the world, so ought reason and mind to preside in the soul of man. The conformity of the human constitution to this law does not imply the rejection of any of its parts, but only their suitable distribution and action. The irrational passions, as useful, and the appetites as necessary, have their subordinate place and office. Submissive to reason, or in concert with it, they give that animation and vigour to the intelligent faculties, which contributes to their laudable operation, and their success §. As ingredients of the human constitution, they are parts of a whole, which are to be arranged, but not set aside. Unlike as they appear to be, to the intelligent principle, they may yet be so regulated, as to harmonise with it. In the visible world, harmony is produced, not by the separation of the elements from each other, but by their due mixture. To remove from the human body all cold or heat, or all moisture or dryness, in the participation of which its proper temperament consists, would not be to promote but to destroy

* Ex Theage, p. 689.

† Hieroc. Comment. in Carm. Ver. 13. 14.

‡ Fragm. ex Critone, p. 619.; *ibid.* ex Archyt. p. 677.

§ *Ibid.* ex Theag. p. 691. 6. 695.

destroy its health. The same rule is applicable to the soul. The extinction of the passions, as it would unhinge its constitution, would be destructive of its active powers.

The affections and passions may indeed be considered as the matter out of which the human virtues themselves are formed *, since, in the due government of them, the moral qualities are beheld. It is the sufferance of pain, and the moderation of pleasures, which chiefly hold forth these dispositions to view, as having excellence and propriety in them. But, for such virtuous exertions, reason, or the counsel of the mind, would prove unequal, were it not for the support which the natural passions afford. Fortitude arises from them †, and excites us to defy and surmount difficulties. In like manner, the powerful instinct for self-preservation enables us to counteract the immoderate desire of pleasure. Nor yet, upon this account, is the lustre of virtue tarnished, but rather is set off to greater advantage, like a picture, the more illuminated by the mingling of light and shade. It proves that there is no obstruction to the harmony of the world ‡, but that all things, according to their nature, bear a part in it; and especially that whatever is connected with the rational faculties of the soul is made responsive to reason's voice, and to conform, in some degree, to its excellence and dignified office.

There is, it must be owned, a sense of decency, which approves it as a general rule in every moral action, that virtue is placed § in a mean between extremes, and chiefly between excess in that which is easy and agreeable to us, and defect in what is troublesome and laborious. To estimate the too much and the too little, must, in various cases, prove difficult. Hence the mixed character, participating of one or other of the extremes that is so commonly found in human life, and which, in the ethics of a more rigid philosophy, would be pronounced a proof of the failure of all human virtue. It obtains, however, more frequently from a mistake of the mean to be observed, and the decorum to be attended to, in moral conduct, than from a wilful trespass upon what is proper

* Ex Theage, p. 683.
in Carm. ver. 12. 13,

† Ex Metopo. p. 686.

‡ Hierocles

§ Ibid. ex Theage, p. 69. 93.

proper and virtuous. Besides, it is to be considered, that the moral qualities of fortitude and temperance are not exerted, as has been said, but in some concurrence with the natural passions, and therefore they are the more liable to run into the extremes. In comparison with prudence and justice, they are virtues of a less perfect kind, which admit of some variations, from what may be reckoned, in certain cases, the measure of their energy, and yet they cease not to be virtues, in a higher or lower degree. All then that philosophy can prescribe with respect to their due exercise, is, to be in the habit of attention to decorum in every particular and important action. Evident it is, that insensibility and languor are no less * inconsistent with true virtue, than the immoderate incitement of passion, or perturbation of the mind. But when, as far as may be done, the mean between these is studied, the way to virtue will be found, as well in the smooth course of Nestor's life †, as in the toilsome one of Ulysses. Those philosophers, who would refine upon this point, weigh passive fortitude against temperance or sufferance of what is painful, against moderation in what is agreeable and pleasant, and insist that the former is a nobler source of virtue than the latter, ought to reflect, that in both characters there is an admission of what is less excellent in its nature, of the taint of passion in the one, and of want of desire or insensibility in the other. Let us, then ‡, be contented to speak of human virtue, according as it is found in human nature, and acknowledge that it is, in general, a certain concord of the irrational with the rational part of our frame, and that the exercise of it is best discovered, when our aversion to pain, and our desire of pleasure, are alike regulated by a sense of decorum.

Beside prudence, which may be called the source or leader of the virtues, beside the faculty that resists difficulties §, and that which restrains desire, it is requisite that the moral temper and disposition be approved and chosen by the will of the mind, otherwise the character of virtue can never be truly embraced, and much less properly sustained. It must be known and regarded as the real good of the mind, in order to its becoming,

* Ibid.

† Ex Archyta, p. 693.

‡ Ex Theage, p. 693.

§ Ex Metopo. p. 695. et. ex Archyta, p. 695.

coming desirable; and then, as the body's good is sought after, for its own sake, so also will that of the rational soul be pursued. In the happiness of human life, the good of each is a necessary ingredient, although the last, by nature and estimation, be more excellent than the first. But to attain its greatest felicity, there must likewise be a concurrence of good destiny. The utmost degree of beatitude competent to man must indeed ever fall short of that of the divinity, as that which is acquired must be inferior to that which is essentially possessed*, and that which depends on certain acts, accompanied with circumstances, must yield to that which has always in itself perfect energy, and an all-disposing power. The human faculties, which have been mentioned, when harmoniously exerted, produce virtue, which is the perfection of human nature; but it is not, therefore, by necessary consequence, the perfection of the happiness of human life in all its conditions. Virtue itself, in order to its complete exercise, requires a certain favourable station, and a sphere of action adapted to it; but this a propitious destiny only can provide. Laudable ever, and so far as his active powers go, the virtuous man must be deemed happy; yet still he would partake more of felicity in a more fortunate arrangement of external things. From this consideration†, it is not to be inferred, that virtue, which consists in the free and independent acts of the mind, should reckon upon the outward advantages of fortune as her life-guards, without which she cannot be conspicuous. Such reliance upon them she does not acknowledge. What is eligible to her is no more than, by the opportunity they may afford, to enlarge her activity, and, with the increase of her beneficent abilities, to augment the felicity she brings to her votaries.

By two things, therefore, the happiness of human life is perfected; by moral discipline‡, and good destiny. The one, like health and vigour of body, qualifies the man to act well his part, whatever his external condition be: the other so accommodates circumstances to his laudable performances, that success, and its sure attendant complacency, are

* Ex Euryphamo, p. 665.
Ex Archyta, p. 678.

† Ibid. p. 667.

‡ Ex Thurio, p. 661.

are the result *. In few words, human felicity is the usage of virtue in good fortune. The estimate of the actual attainment of it is not to be made from single acts, or a few particular events, but from the general tenor of the one, and the collective sum of the other. Accidental variations there may be found in both, which yet, like the stops in music, hinder not the progress of the concords, and their issue in the best harmony. In the conduct of human life, there cannot be too much reason used, or too much virtue performed; yet, in the circumstances attending it, there may be imparted a superfluity of external goods, or what may be called an excess of good fortune; which is always dangerous, and often hurtful to the possessor. But here the oeconomy of Providence is worthy to be observed †. The deity, ever wise and watchful of man's greatest good, has only put in his power that accomplishment of his nature, in the use of which he cannot err or exceed. Virtue is assigned as his sure guide to happiness; while, with respect to the situations of life, in which it is to be exercised, whether in more or less outward prosperity, a reserve is found to take place, and a disposing power is kept in the hands of destiny. In those of man, who never can be a sufficient, and would generally be a partial judge, it could not in reason be placed: he, therefore, remains unassured whether his virtuous acts may be allowed all the extent he may wish, or be followed with that measure of success and felicity they may deserve. Yet of this he cannot complain, if he admits it as a principle, that virtue is eligible for its own sake, as well as on account of the good it produces.

There is, however, one external condition of human life, to which beatitude, as the consequence of virtue exercised in it ‡, appears to be chiefly or only annexed. It is that of social and civil life enjoyed in a free and well regulated commonwealth. Such seems to be the order of divine destiny, with respect to man, that, disjoined from society, he should vanish, as it were, out of being; and that, notwithstanding all the propensities and powers he has to relish it, and to form a part of its harmony,

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* Ibid. p. 680.

† Ex Euryphamo, p. 668.

‡ Ibid. p. 666.

mony, he should exist no more * than a creature is supposed to do, when, though alive, it is bereft of all its natural faculties. Without society, constituted in its best political form, without connection with a commonwealth, the model of order and equity, no good of nature's gift can be truly enjoyed, nor any acquired one be possessed with security. But under the auspices of a republican government, every private benefit has a double relish, and is enhanced in its value. As an equal right, common to every one of the community, it is participated of without envy or fear, being undetached from, and accounted subservient to, the public good. In a similar manner, every advantage derived to the state redounds to the profit, or to the credit of its individual members. In respect of all exterior advantages, life, in such a community, may be reckoned the possession of Amalthea's horn of plenty, so celebrated by the poets. But it is still more to be esteemed in another point of view: It is Virtue's school, and her sanctuary †. There, morals and manners, such as become men and citizens, are studied, and exhibited with honour and applause. There, right reason and piety being cultivated, the sanctity of the virtues is maintained, while sacred and just laws operate with all their authority and benign influence.

Among the proofs of man's superiority above other animals in capacity and intelligence, there is none in which he discovers such knowledge of the world he inhabits ‡, or so signally imitates the wisdom of its founder, than in the instance he gives of his penetration and ability in making civil government exist in its noblest and best form, which is only to be found in a republic. His applying names to things distinctive of their species, or his invention of letters, for the silent speech of the mind, cannot be accounted more worthy of admiration. To be the founder of a political state, in which laws and not men rule, is the highest attainment of human wisdom. To live with virtue, and to die, in such a constitution, may be reckoned that circumstance which consummates human felicity §. Deprived of this happy addition to his lot in life, even the virtuous man has reason to regret his destiny, if not as quite unfortunate, at least as unfavourable.

But

* Ex Hippodomo Thurio, p. 662.
p. 666.

† Ibid. p. 663.

§ Ex Hippod. Thur. p. 653.

‡ Ex Euryphamo,

But if, in human life, a compensation for the want of this disagreeable destiny can be found, it is that of contemplation, or the exercise of that intellectual power of the soul, which may be compared to the eye of the body *, as it comprehends things in *wholes*, or entire compositions; whilst its perceptive faculty apprehends them singly, or by transition from one part of them to another. It may also be distinguished from the reasoning faculty, when following, step by step, the information of the senses, and their slow and lame experience of things, it arrives only at a probable, but no certain judgment with respect to them. This † superior light of the mind, which well may be reckoned of divine original, opens the source of knowledge in a way more immediate and distinct, by bringing forward objects that are wholes in themselves; and, being so considered by the mind, claim its first attention. As, in common reason, the idea of a whole is prior to that of a part, so that of the constitution of the world, or of the universe, is antecedent to any conception of its component parts. The latter can be supposed to have no existence but in reference to the former. If there were no formed world, there could neither be sun, nor moon, nor star, of any denomination; but because there is a world, constituted as it is, these things are not only seen, but known for what they are. In like manner, what could be understood of an eye, an ear, or a limb, without the previous knowledge of an animal, of which these might be the proper members. The conception of a general constitution of things, or of whole natures, is therefore the foundation of all true knowledge, or wisdom, properly so called: And, if we would extend this contemplation farther, we must say, that, as the whole is to the part, in respect of precedency, so is the virtue of the whole to the virtue of the part, in respect of power and efficacy. As the world could not have existed without constitutional harmony, so neither could it continue in its state without the constant energy of that principle: But the recognition of it as a truth, that the world is ruled by one principle, leads on the intelligent mind to the discovery ‡ of Deity, or the existence of that being, in whom the fitness

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* Ex Euryph. *ibid.*

† Ex Archyta de sapientia, p. 732.

‡ *Ibid.* pag. 734.

of order and harmony, or reason, in its perfection, ever resides. Without this knowledge, wisdom halts; but he is the wise man*, and above all others most conversant in truth, who having thus comprehended the universe, or the whole of being, under one principle, and referred its efficiency to one cause, is farther able to trace its arrangement into specific natures, and discover what distinguishes them from, and how they are subordinate to, one another; and, while so diversified, what singular tie connects them with the whole.

To such contemplation the human soul is prompted by its innate desire of knowledge; which, unsatisfied with the survey of earthly objects †, seeks to investigate those of celestial dignity, and to recreate itself with the conception of forms that are of a permanent and divine nature. How much may the thought of the brevity of human life dispose man to indulge this speculation; and how forcibly does the consideration of its many natural and moral evils enjoin it as a proper resource? These can, indeed, be no more dissembled than they can be altogether avoided. Such as bestow little thought upon them, or affect to overlook them, are more apt than others to be overwhelmed with their unexpected assault. But, surely, it is fit that we should know ourselves, and what is allotted to man in his present condition ‡; out of which, as it is not permitted to any to withdraw himself without the leave of his commander, so it is indecent and unmanly to be always deploring its distresses and calamities. By the adept in wisdom, none of them are unreckoned upon: They are known to be concomitants of his corporeal habitation, and of the soul's remission into a temporary exile. Comfortable it is to reflect, that it is to be endured only for a space of time, which is as a point, or as nothing, compared with eternity. He, therefore, takes courage, not from ignorance, or insensibility of human evils, but from observing a divine destination with respect to them; and, especially, that they can have a pernicious efficacy solely upon the wilful slaves

* Ex Stobaei Sententiis, in Serm. I. de Virtute, pag. 23. fol. edit. Hieroclis Comment. in v. 49. 50. 51.

† Ex Hipparch. pag. 660.

‡ Cicero de Senectute, fol. edit. p. 416. Hieroc. in Aur. Car. v. 46. 47. 48.

flaves of sense and corporeal passion *. The remedy is put in his own power; and the soul, which yet bears the traits of her high original, longs to apply it. Instructive, and, therefore, so far agreeable, she knows her short peregrination here may be rendered. From it she learns what it is to be enveloped in a mass of gross and corruptible matter; where the perception of sensible things is only delusive, and that of those which have the character of truth, is obscured or lost. She feels what misery arises from the failure of reason's light †, and the dominion of the unruly and irrational appetites. From their tumult she makes an effort to escape, by the faculty she retains of self-recollection. Its repeated acts suspend the career of the passions, and produce that happy attainment of the proficient in true philosophy, *internal tranquillity*, to which all vulgar souls are ever strangers.

This mental tranquillity may be considered as the ascent of the soul, from the dense air of the earth, to that of the unclouded and serene aether. Congenial she feels it to herself; and introductive of the recognisance of her native faculty of contemplation. Such feeble discoveries of truth as she had been before enabled to make, from the precarious information of the senses, and which she could understand to be only simple judgments of their experiences, she finds now to be the openings of her own intellectual powers, and that all human science is to be considered as the flower of those seeds of knowledge originally planted in her. Let us here attend to what Nature has done for the animals placed far below the rank of man. Do they borrow their sagacity from abroad; or is it required of them to seek it from external objects? No. Nature has instructed the individuals of every species in all points relative either to their particular preservation, or to the general good of their kind. How utterly improbable is it, that this providence of nature should not take place with respect to mankind, but that they should be left to find out, by help of their sensible perceptions alone, not only the openings to knowledge, but all the conclusions of reason, and the principles of abstract science? If the latter were not the product

* Hieroc. in Aur. Car. v. 17. 18. 19.
28. 8vo edit. pag. 289.

† Maxim. Tyrius, Diff.
‡ Ibid. pag. 293.

product of the human intellect, acting of itself, the former could be turned to no rational account, or reflect upon the soul the light of truth, and the evidence of general and scientific knowledge.

Whence is it, that what is called *natural genius* is found so different in its degrees among men, that some understand at once *, and as it were by a glance of thought, what others do not comprehend but with the greatest study and application? How is it, that the true poet is said to be born such; the musical genius to require no master; and the wise lawgiver, and the able commander in the field, to have each of them his peculiar talent, bestowed by Nature, with little aid from study or instruction? Were such reputable endowments to be acquired by labour and industry, they would not be so rarely exemplified. But no exertion of pains is sufficient to supply what all men agree in saying, *the gods only can give*. Intellect is, indeed, originally the same in all men; and, were it not so, the most intelligent would hardly correspond in their idea of any one truth. But the corporeal prison of the soul admits of great variations; and, as the matter composing it is mutable, so the bodily organs are diversified. In some they are easily moved; in others more slowly. In many they are so gross, that the soul is seldom roused to any reflection. But, from the awakening † which philosophy gives, her intellectual powers revive; and her conceptions following close to one another, appear more like the retracing of ideas formerly known, and exertions of the memory, than as discoveries of science newly made, in consequence of a train of progressive reasoning. Such a reminiscent faculty may well be supposed to appertain to the soul, pre-existent as she has been in another state, where the natures of things were contemplated, not by intermissive and partial views, but intuitively, and by *wholes*. A reason, therefore, may be assigned, why the poets reckon memory (Mnemosyne) to be the nurse, or mother of the muses ‡. They are the daughters of Jove, and the same with the sciences; but it is memory that produces them to men, and ascertains their due order and harmony.

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* Maxim. Tyrius, Dissert. 28. pag. 293.

‡ Hesiod in Theog. v. 52.

† Ibid. 298.

The human or civil virtues, perfected by justice, have been said to bear analogy to that eternal law of reason, and order, which combines the system of the universe. The contemplative mind assumes them in this illustrious point of view. Regarded not merely as the dictates of prudence, which have decorum and utility in human life *, but as principles co-ordinate with the wisdom of the universe, and portions of it; their tendency to elevate the soul possessed of them to the life of the gods, becomes manifest †. The heights of perfection and felicity attainable by virtuous souls have no other limitation except what the law of their being prescribes. Sufficient to beatitude these attainments must be, which extend to the happiest qualification their state can admit. But, while virtue and knowledge thus exalt the human soul, vice and ignorance degrade it. In the latter, neither principle nor consistency can be found. Disjoined from what is true, uniform, and just, in the constitution of the universe, they are necessarily involved in a proscription from good, which only can arise from conformity to virtue and truth, the fixed principles of union and harmony in the moral world. Hence the vicious are seen precipitated into various evils, that bring on their ruin; rolling like heavy stones upon a declivity, which, along with the discomposure they may give to other bodies, fail not to be dashed in pieces by their own weight.

Here, then, we may conclude the account of the Pythagorean philosophy, which exhibited a theory of the universe reduced to a system complete in its physical and moral parts, but little resembling any one that issued from the masters or disciples of the Ionic school. It had, indeed, evident marks of a foreign original, from the manner in which it was taught, and the peculiar discipline it prescribed. With a sublimity of ideas in theology that surpassed the best of the Grecian theories, it appeared to recede too far from simplicity, and to err by a superfluity of principles and doctrines. Along with exalted conceptions of an eternal mind or deity, it held forth a system of gods of undetermined power; and an infusion of a rational soul into the world, which rendered it an intelligent

* Aurea Carm. Vers. 45. 46. 47. cum Hieroc. Comment.

† Ibid. Vers. 70. 71.

gent being, while nature was still required to act her part. These, and other tenets, arranged with method, and a shew of consistency, proved the complicated system to be the result of long and deep study, and the production of those foreign colleges of philosophy and literature, which had subsisted for generations, and with which Pythagoras was for so many years conversant. Whether the exceptionable parts of it may be regarded as additions, which it is natural to suppose these learned men would make to a more primitive, simpler, and purer theology, to the knowledge of which, in Egypt especially, they might have access, belongs not to our subject particularly to investigate. Without entering into these elaborate discussions, to which this question has given room, the probability is, that the Mosaic Scriptures, and other prophetic writings under the Jewish dispensation, could not be unknown to the priests of Egypt, Chaldaea, and other adjacent countries. What use they made of them is another point, which cannot, perhaps, be more truly determined, than by saying, that they would assume from them such theological ideas and moral doctrines as they could best accommodate to their own favourite systems. That they would hold them in contempt, or neglect them, as the Grecians and Romans afterwards did, is extremely improbable. In these early ages, knowledge, wherever it could be found, was eagerly sought after, and not despised; neither was the Jewish nation then in that low estimation among the neighbouring kingdoms, to render their antiquities or their religious and civil knowledge unworthy of regard. This degraded character, they, in subsequent times of their depression, and from the pride of conquering nations, incurred. What we here alledge the Egyptian priests might do, with respect to the Mosaic writings, was certainly much practised in regard to their own store of erudition and science. The proofs already given will be followed with other evidence, how common among nations this sort of plagiarism was, when the rarity of knowledge increased the vanity of being accounted originals in it.

We cannot, therefore, ascribe more to the philosophical genius of Pythagoras, than that it enabled him to disclose a theory of the universe, wrapt in mysteries, taught in the most abstract manner, and still perhaps wanting, in the hands of its masters, that finishing which he was qualified

qualified to give it. That he might methodise, and, in some respects, extend and improve its general principles, is probable; that he modified them in the moral and political part, so as to bring them nearer to the genius and taste of his countrymen, appears a certainty. But, with all the illustrations and improvements this philosophy received from Pythagoras, or his ablest disciples, it was still accounted in the other Grecian schools a borrowed system, and was not thoroughly known or studied among them, until Plato gave it a place in his Dialogues; with such embellishments, however, as his invention suggested. Blended with his philosophy, it became less distinguishable from it; and, as the sect declined, its original doctrines were corrupted, or, by a motley superstructure induced upon them, rendered extravagant and absurd. Yet the ancient fame of its disciples revived their investigation; and, from the sketch given of them upon the authorities cited, we may judge that they well merited this attention and labour. Not only are several of the principles and doctrines held forth, important, instructive, and entertaining to the human mind, but they are supported upon arguments that discover a profundity of thought and reflection upon the universe, the different natures of the beings that compose it, and the special, yet uniform and harmonious laws by which they are governed. Above all, the placing the consummation of wisdom in the knowledge of one eternal and incorporeal principle, the primary and efficient cause of all that is orderly and beautiful in the universe, and the resolving the moral discipline of the human soul into the perfection of its faculties for contemplation, and the appointed course of its advancement to a happy and divine condition, must be owned such rational and noble sentiments as prove those tracts of the Pythagorean philosophy a venerable remainder of ancient wisdom and science.

Having mentioned the difficulties that occur in chronology, in ascertaining the period of Pythagoras's birth, and also that of several events in his life, we shall subjoin to this section, not any essay upon this perplexed point, but such an account of the computation by Olympiads, and of the aera to which it refers, and the term of years included in each of its periods, called an Olympiad, as may render intelligible those dates of

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chronology

chronology which will, in the subsequent pages, be frequently announced*.

* The aera to which, as a fixed date in time, the chronological reckoning by Olympiads referred, was that of the institution of the Olympic games, celebrated in honour of Jupiter Olympius, at Elis, a city in the Peloponnesus of Greece. This aera was convenient on account of the regular return of the solemnity of these games within a limited time. But it happened unfortunately for this scheme of chronology, that scarcely any event recorded in history was of a more uncertain and undeterminable date, than the commencement of the Olympic games. Venerated as they were in Greece, and their origin reckoned an important piece of knowledge in its antiquities, no investigation availed to fix either the time or occasion of their institution. The account given of the latter circumstance in Herodotus, lib. 8. alluded to by Pindar, Olympion ode 2. and followed by Diodorus Siculus, lib. 4. who ascribe their first celebration to Hercules the son of Alcmena, is rejected and confuted by Strabo, lib. 8.; and Pausanias, Eliacorum prior, vel lib. 5. shows what various opinions, and all of them fabulous, were entertained upon that point. One supposition, with respect to it, appeared to be allowable, that these games were either unknown, or in no reputation before the war of Troy; since it could not well be imagined, that Homer, who abounds with such narratives, would have omitted to mention them. Some evidence there was of their being celebrated, if not, after long intermission, re-instituted by Iphitus, King of Elis, contemporary with Lycurgus, as mentioned by Plutarch in the life of that lawgiver. But the great uncertainty of this period in chronology, as well as the discontinuance of the games for various years, still left an exact date of time, and the regular measurement of certain intervals of it, in doubt or obscurity. It was therefore suggested by Phlegon, the author of the computation by Olympiads, to fix upon a period, in which there appeared the least chronological dubiety, and the other requisite circumstance of the stated celebration of the games might also be found. Such what was called the 25th Olympiad, in the common reckoning of them from Iphitus's time, was judged to be, when Choraebus proved victor in the race on foot, and of which the memory was preserved in his sepulchre at Elis. From that period, the Olympic games were regularly solemnized at the end and completion of every fourth year; so that they were generally held in the second month of the fifth, and continued for five days. Reckoning, then, an Olympiad a scale of four years, and that twenty-eight of them were elapsed in that marked by Choraebus's victory, the only question was, to what aeras fixed in chronology the first year of the first Olympiad was to be referred. It has been generally agreed, with only the variation of a year or two, to correspond to the 408th year from the taking of Troy; to the 19th before the building of Rome; and to the 757th or 759th before the Christian aera. Computing, therefore, according to the Olympiads,

piads, it is plain, that Rome was built in the 3d year of the fifth of them, and Pythagoras reckoned to have been born about the 47th; his birth answers to the 169th year of Rome; by this rule, that the announced number of Olympiads multiplied by four, and a deduction made of nineteen years, will always give the year of the ancient Roman calendar. If, again, a given year of this epoch be subtracted from the number assigned for the commencement of the Olympiads, or 19 years before the building of Rome, the year preceding the nativity of Christ will be found. Thus, if the 169th of Rome be given for the birth of Pythagoras, and the subtraction of it be made from 757 or 759, there will remain either 588 or 590, to mark the years before the Christian aera.

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P A R T

PART III.

SECTION I.

Of the Foundation of the Eleatic School,—and of the Sect called Acataleptics ;—and of the Philosophy of Heraclitus and Empedocles.

THE reproach which Diodorus Siculus throws upon the Grecian philosophers, who early divided into sects, controverted * each other's theories, and, from emulation of excellence in invention, or in the faculty of disputing, or for the sake of increasing the number of their disciples, and procuring gain to themselves, hesitated not to call in question truths the most essential in science, and of the greatest importance in human life, may be pronounced too severe, and partly unjust, but not quite destitute of foundation. Concerned for advancing their fortunes, the early philosophers of Greece were not ; but, on the contrary, such of them as possessed considerable wealth, exhausted it in their travels abroad, or in other pursuits of knowledge. Schools, in which pecuniary profits were exacted, were for a long time unknown among them, and had not an introduction, but with the degeneracy of philosophy, in the age of the *Sophists*. To the other part of the accusation, it must be owned, that several of them made themselves obnoxious. Evident it is, that the genius of the Greeks, fertile in invention beyond that of other nations, submitted not easily or soon to laborious searches into natural things, or to such tedious observations or experiments as could help them to just explications of their phenomena. With them,
imagination

* Diod. Bib. Hist. lib. 2. fol. edit. p. 115.

imagination was the predominant faculty; and all exertions of it were held in the highest esteem. Speculative ingenuity, often supported more upon plausible than solid reasoning, was accounted adequate to all discoveries that could be made in the physical and apparent, as well as in the conceived, but invisible, departments of the world. Hence their philosophers of the Ionic school have been seen, each of them assuming one or more of the natural elements, as his principle of all things; and, without strictly examining what that element was in itself, or how qualified to produce other things, its opposites in nature, proceeding rapidly to generate from it, and arrange the complex constitution of the heavens and the earth. It would seem, that, as their faculty of invention had given them one poet that might be ranked with the first in the world, and some others of signal merit, so they trusted that their abstract speculations would carry them, with sufficient certainty and sure applause, to the knowledge of the general system of nature, in its extent and dependencies. Having often traversed the field of the natural elements, they began to be fatiated with this task, and to throw their theories entirely upon abstract reasoning; and, considering all things as one universe, either infinite or finite, to abridge, or rather supersede all inquiries about the different natures and qualities of things; and to have only one question to be resolved, Whether, under the predicament stated, things could be reckoned to stand, or to move; or, in other words, if real motion could obtain in the world.

This section may well be introduced with these reflections, confirmed as they will be by the account now to be given of the Eleatic sect, so called from Elea, or Yla, a town of Lucania, in Italy, that gave birth to Zeno*, who, for his fame in acute disputation, got the name of being the founder of a sect, which really commenced with Xenophanes. This philosopher, who was a native of Colophon, in Ionia, appeared many years before Zeno, and is reckoned to have flourished about the 60th Olympiad. It is a question, under what teacher of philosophy he studied, or whether he had any instructor; although Bion of Athens be named for one, and even Archelaus, by a considerable time posterior to him,

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. quart. edit. p. 502.

him, for another. He had, for his disciple, Parmenides, whose reputation surpassed his own, and whose elevés Zeno and Melissus, were no less famous. The last of them insisted upon the singular positions Xenophanes advanced, from which the two former varied greatly; but they were together reckoned supporters of the Eleatic sect, which was also called that of the *Acataleptics*.

Disgusted, it is said, with the fictions of Homer and Hesiod, about the gods, the Colophonian Philosopher made them both the subject of his satire; alledging, that it was not more absurd and impious to affirm that the gods were mortal *, than to say, with these poets, that they were generated. His own tenets in theology, and his speculations on the constitution of all things, which he composed, and published in verse, were by no means reckoned remarkable either for consistency or perspicuity. Aristotle, an able judge, expressly declares that he was not distinct in delivering his opinion about the universe †; but that, casting his eyes around the heavens, he often pronounced the sentence, that *one was God*. This apothegm, however, was understood to refer to that noted doctrine of his, of a *one eternal, infinite, and immoveable universe*; into the particular discussion of which the Stagyrte enters in another place ‡, where Xenophanes's reasoning is stated by him in the following manner: "All that is, or the universe, must be eternal; because from nothing, nothing can come. For, whether we suppose all things generated, or some eternal, and others generated, the production of something out of nothing will, either way, follow; since, if to an eternal any thing some other thing be added, there must be a generation, more or less, of what before was not; and this comes from nothing. But what is eternal is also infinite; for eternity hath no point, whence can be reckoned its origin, or its end: And what is infinite is one; for, if it were two or more, one of them might terminate, and another begin, or each have its limitation. One is further every way, like itself, and can admit no dissimilarity, without becoming another thing,
or

* Cicero de Nat. Deor. lib. 1. Quæst. Acad. lib. 2. † Aristot. Metaph. lib. 1. chap. 5. fol. edit. oper. omn. Sextus Emper. Hypotyp. lib. 1. p. 46.

‡ De Xenophane.

or more than one thing. But a one eternal, infinite, and every way similar thing, is immoveable; for it cannot move but by exceeding itself, or going out of its place: neither can it be transposed, unless by moving either into a *plenum*, or into a void. By the former it cannot be received, and the other is nothing."

From this ratiocination, the subsumption was, that there could be no real generation of things, either by the secretion or the mixture of their parts, or any modes of motion; no more than there could be such a destruction of their qualities, as would imply a series of it, and a change of the one whole; and therefore, whatever changes seemed to us to take place, were only apparent and not real; and since our senses deceived us in some particulars, they might be concluded to do the same, in all imagined motions of things. Whence it followed, that the only thing comprehensible was, that of a *one* eternal and immoveable universe, and that no other certain opinion about any thing could be entertained.

Thus we have exhibited the whole argumentation used by the founder the sect of the Acataleptics, which had this denomination from their holding the *incomprehensibility* of all things: Yet it is to be observed*, that Sextus Empiricus excludes Xenophanes from the class of sceptics, and holds him for a dogmatist; who, says he, maintained a one all of things, and god congenial with them; and that this being was spherical, without passions, immutable, and rational. This representation of his theory fully confirms Aristotle's opinion with respect to it, that it was not perspicuous; for in his reasoning upon the all that is, he did not say of what nature or substance it was, and whether only corporeal or not. He was, however, understood by that philosopher, to make the material and sensible world his god, and to reject all other substance. In this conception of his dialectic thesis, the Stagyrte minutely traces every branch of his argument, in a manner that not only shows how contrary it was to the dictates of common sense and reason among mankind, but clearly proves it to be futile, absurdly conceived in itself, equivocal and inconclusive. As it has been adopted by superficial reasoners, who would, on slight ground, espouse materialism, and bears a great analogy

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* Ibid.

to the delusive reasoning used in Spinoza's atheistical credenda, though the form of its propositions be varied in them, we shall here collect, from Aristotle, those confutations of Xenophanes's doctrine, which appear no less ingenious than forcible and conclusive.

The axiom, that out of nothing nothing can come, although a common one in philosophy, has not been adhered to by philosophers in their theories about the universe *: On the contrary, all of them, preceding Xenophanes, have agreed in admitting certain principles of generation, whence other things were formed; unless such of them be excepted, as supposed generation to proceed in an eternal series: And yet, it is to be asked, whence came the ungenerated principles of the former, or from what arises the infinite series of the latter? Are they not to be considered as proceeding from, or caused by, nothing? But the proposition, which neither assumes original principles, nor supposes an eternity of generation, but states, that the universe, or whatever is now, was always, must be pronounced a most gross and irrational one; for, if there be no generation of things, no principles, or powers, in the universe †, which produce the many and different things that every moment arise, they must be concluded to have ever existed, or else to be nothing; since, according to this assertion, they can come from nothing. But, although there be a necessity, in reason, for affirming that something ever was, there can be none for inferring, that whatever is, is that same thing, and not another, or different; for it is a fallacy to say, that, if to what is ungenerated, and eternal, any thing accede, there must arise a more and a less in it, and that from nothing. This is not true with respect to matter or body, which may be at rest, or in motion, and undergo several changes in its parts, without being, in the whole of its substance, either augmented or diminished. Yet again, this something eternal is said, of consequence, to be infinite. To this, Aristotle properly opposes the reasoning of Parmenides, who, in this point, differing from his master, acknowledged, that, although the universe were one, and eternal, it did not follow that it was infinite; for, supposing, as Xenophanes

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* Aristot. Physic. lib. 5. c. 6. p. 784.

† Arist. de Xenophane, ibid.

did, that it was like an immense globular mass *, equally round, it then must be concluded to have a middle and extremes, and so cannot be infinite, but circumscribed and bounded. But how, indeed, adds the Stagirite, if the universe be body, can it possibly be infinite? How have parts, separate from, and terminated by one another, and yet these finite, and, therefore, by themselves moveable parts, constitute a universe infinite, and without mobility? If it be either earth, air, water, fire, or any corporeal substance, and yet have infinity, this attribute must be extended to its magnitude, its breadth, and its profundity, and thus infinite will be multiplied. To this consequence of his position, Xenophanes himself seems to have adverted, by allowing an infinite depth to the earth, and to the air, while he represents his universe as destitute of all motion, even that of respiration; because there is no *vacuum* within it, and without it there is nothing. It admits, says he, no dissimilarity; for one is every way like itself. But this is an obscure or equivocal mode of expression, since there is no likeness to infinity, but infinite itself; and to compare one with itself, appears an absurdity.

The general inference, that there is nothing comprehensible but a one eternal and infinite something, or any certain opinion to be formed about any thing besides, is marked with the same futility that runs through the series of the argument. For why is this only to be comprehended? because a some one thing ever must have been and be; otherwise the all that is would proceed from nothing. But how come we then to comprehend this axiom as true, that *nothing is from nothing*; upon which this argumentation is founded? We have only the evidence of our senses and perceptions that any thing exists. They vouch, that we, and other things around us, have being. Their testimony, therefore, cannot be discredited without removing every foundation of a question, or rational argument †. Again, let it be considered, how this conception of a one infinite, and no other, would display itself, were it applied to any of the abstract sciences, that have number or quantity for their object. If any one should, in this manner, assert, that *unite* infinite comprehended all numbers, and that every other numerical denomi-
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* Cicero ad Lucullum.

† Aristot. Physic. lib. 1. cap. 2. 3.

tion was incompetent, and could not be traced; and, by the same rule, should affirm, that all figures in geometry were contained in one infinite round, or square, and that no other figure, but the one or the other, could be rationally contemplated, is it not evident, according to this doctrine, that the sciences of arithmetic and geometry would be rendered unintelligible, and totally subverted? Yet such is the sophistical reasoning of Xenophanes, and his followers, when they maintain all things to be one infinite.

Melissus, however, thought fit to maintain the incomprehensible positions of the philosopher of Colophon, and determined, in plainer terms than he had done, that the *one all* was, in its nature, matter or body; but whether this matter was of one quality, or consisted of two or more of the known elements of body, he left undecided. A principle under this vague denomination, and which was still said to be one infinite, and immovable, could no more account for the generations in nature, than the abstract one of Xenophanes could be the foundation of science. And here it ought to be recollected, that the materialists, who admitted body as their only principle, generally neglected, or evaded any definition, or even a particular description of it; and, as we are acquainted with bodies only in their compound and qualified state, the deepest researches of philosophers not having discovered of what pure and simple essences they are composed; matter or body was contemplated in philosophy, not according to clear or determined ideas of its substance, but as having certain natural qualities, or attributes, which, because they are commonly perceived in its arranged condition, were often erroneously, and without sufficient inquiry, allowed to be properties inherent in, or essential to it. But this topic may be more fully insisted upon when we come to consider the theories of the atomical philosophers. The subject now under consideration rather calls our attention to what was before hinted, that there is a manifest analogy between the reasoning of Xenophanes and that of Spinoza, and not only so, but that the former appears to have been the model † of the latter, cast into a different form. The

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* Arist. Metaphys. lib. 1. cap. 5.

† It is said, that, in an epistle to Henry Oldenburg, Secretary to the Royal Society

same sophistical argumentation which the ancient philosopher raised upon his abstract principle of a one infinite, and immoveable, the modern has the address to imitate and pursue, upon his axiom, which was similar to it, that there could be only *one substance* in the universe. But, does he, in the course of his geometrical proofs, define what he meant by substance? No; unless we understand the old scholastic definition, that it is what subsists of itself; and, therefore, must be concluded necessary, independent, and eternal. Do we admire, if this concession be made about the unintelligible term *substance*, that a series of demonstrations may be built upon it; and that what is never explained should, by an artificial contexture of corollaries, be arrayed with all the attributes of a corporeal deity. This one undivided, and indivisible substance*, may modify itself, in an infinity of manners and ways; be space, body, extension; be bounded, and not bounded; be impassioned, and impassive; be constantly affected with motions and changes, and yet, upon the whole, neither moved nor changed. It appears, however, that the two espousers of the same impious theory did not quite agree in their explanations of it; and in this respect the ancient speculatist may be reckoned less presumptuous, if not more rational, than the modern. Xenophanes, it would seem, rather than admit modifications of his one infinite, which he thought incompetent to it, chose to impugn or deny the reality of any such changes. The other, by giving place to them in his one substance, testified the insensibility of his heart to all the horrors of his execrable system. Bayle, the sceptical Bayle, appears to have recoiled from them; when, having the subject before him, in his article † of Xenophanes, he concludes, that the best result of our reasoning, with respect to the generation of things, from certain principles, or their production from nothing, is, that *every thing but God had a beginning*. For, to explain the generations of Nature upon the supposition of several
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ciety of London, Spinoza acknowledged, that he took the great principle of his system, that there could be only one substance in the universe, from the ancient philosophers, but held it forth in a new light, with better proofs, in the geometrical method. *Histoire Critique de la Philosophie*, par Deslandes, 8vo. edit. tom. 1. p. 179.

* Deslandes, *ibid.*

† *Dictionnaire Critique.*

eternal principles, whose action and reaction may diversify that which otherwise would remain uniform, if nothing exterior to it intervened, amounts to no more than, for the sake of avoiding one difficulty, to run upon another which is greater.

The incomprehensibility of Xenophanes's principles did not prevent his incurring the public suspicion on account of them. He was soon in life obliged to leave Colophon *, and to make Zancle and Catania, in Sicily, his retreat. There, complaining once to Hiero, King of Syracuse, that, being poor, he could keep no more than one servant, That, indeed, replied Hiero, is strange; especially when it is considered, that Homer, so long since dead, and so ridiculed by you, should be able to maintain ten thousand dependents. Of a life, extended to ninety-two years, he spent sixty-seven of them in exile. It is to be observed, that ancient authors differ much from one another in their accounts of his doctrines; and that his notion of deity, as Diogenes Laertius styles it, does not correspond to the interpretation of it by Aristotle, Sextus Empiricus, and others. But we can hardly quote, from antiquity, a greater authority than the agreement of these two about any opinion entertained in philosophy.

Parmenides, sensible of the contradiction of the one infinite, and immoveable, applied to the universe, or natural world, not only conceived it to be finite, but that there was a distinction to be made in the principle of the *one all*; which might be expressed by being said to be one, and all, or an indefinite number. But whether this distinction amounted to Plato's representation of it, in his dialogue, entitled Parmenides, as drawing the line between the intellectual and sensible worlds, and assigning immobility to the one, and fluctuation to the other, admits of considerable doubt. Cudworth, no less ingenious than learned in his explications of difficulties that occur about the tenets of the ancient philosophers, discovers his ability in supporting the truth of Plato's allegation. He observes, that, in analogy to this doctrine, Parmenides held two physical principles; those of fire and earth, or heat and humidity, which together operated to the generations in nature, the one as the artificer,

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9.

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9.

tificer, and the other as the subject of the work. This tenet we find ascribed to him by Deogenes Laertius †, and others, and is, indeed, a sufficient proof of what is not called in question, that he differed widely from Xenophanes, but can be no evidence of his espousing the system of the universe that has been mentioned. The principle may be rather reckoned a common one, as it was adopted by several disciples of the Ionic school. But the chief, and only forcible argument is, that we cannot, without some such supposition, understand upon what ground the controversy proceeded between the followers of Parmenides, and those of Heraclitus, which divided almost all the philosophers of that age into two great parties, according as they espoused either the immobility, or mobility of things, and, consequently, held, the one, the appearance, and the other, the reality of motion. But, if the argument between them only included this point, of local rest or motion, and had no reference to the state of mind in the universe, it would seem to be frivolous, and not of such great significance; and, if the Parmenideans maintained the immobility, in Xenophanes's sense of it, they would coincide with Heraclitus, and his disciples, in the consequence of their doctrine; which, from the constant fluidity of all things, inferred their incomprehensibility. Aristotle, however, takes notice, that the dispute between the parties was of the highest importance, as it involved the question, whether there were, in the nature of things, fixed principles of truth, and science, beyond what the perception of sensible objects only conveyed to the human understanding? or, if all our knowledge was to be accounted no more than an incoherent mass of such perceptions? That the tenet of Heraclitus, and his followers, led to the widest, and wildest scepticism, is sufficiently obvious, when they maintained, that the universe, or all of things, visible and invisible, was without either self-consistency, or dependency of parts, and in constant and perpetual mutation; but there is some dubiety, whether this philosopher's opinion reached to all this pitch of extravagance; as will be remarked when we come to the account of his life. His assertions, however, were reckoned such as unhinged all truth of science, or certainty of human knowledge.

† Lib 9. p. 561.

ledge. By what sort of argumentation Parmenides opposed his doctrine of the immobility of things to this scepticism, so as to support intellectual and moral principles of truth, we are little informed, unless we adopt the state of the controversy as found in Plato, which will be afterwards particularly explained. Hence we need only observe, that the qualified doctrine of the immobility ascribed to Parmenides, and by which the character of stability is assigned to mind and intelligence, and that of fluctuation to the objects of sense, served as a proper introduction to Plato's system of ideas, existing by themselves, independent of matter, or the sensible world. As Heraclitus and Parmenides flourished, according to Laertius, about the 69th Olympiad, the Athenian philosopher is reckoned to commit an Anachronism, when he introduces the latter, even although in his old age, as a contemporary with Socrates.

The Eleatic sect had its most distinguished disciple in Zeno Eleates; who, if what was called the *Eristic*, or the disputatious kind of philosophy, deserved approbation, was surely entitled to much honour and applause. But we cannot truly esteem that art of reasoning, which, encouraging more the study of evasion or fallacy, than of truth in argument, seems to attain its end, when it throws every question into perplexity, and confounds, but does not convince, or inform the inquisitive mind. It was principally cultivated under Euclid, the founder of the Megaric school, the elevates of which got the name of the Contentious Sect appropriated to them. Zeno, however, as a father of the Dialectic *, or Logics, obtained the praise of Aristotle, who, in other respects, could not be supposed to admire his philosophy; and, when he extolled his ingenuity in argument, might be thought to derogate from his own. Zeno's famous arguments against local motion proved a remarkable trial of the Stagirite's faculty in subtile disputation; and it remained long a question in the schools, whether they were properly answered by him. We may indeed imagine what the subtilty of his conceptions was, by his being the first who argued, that space, or place of body †, could be nothing.

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. p. 560. Sextus Empir. adv. Math. lib. 7. p. 139.

† Aristot. Phys. lib. 6. cap. 9. p. 300.

nothing, or at most an idea of the mind ; for this reason, that, if it were any real thing, it might be as well asserted, that there was a place of that place, and the same affirmation continued in an endless series ; which overthrows all reasoning. But his four objections to the reality of motion were deemed the most singular proof of his invention ; when, in a matter that appeared to be placed beyond all contest, he could suggest such arguments as were specious, and not easily confuted, and yet not constituted upon a misapplication, or ambiguity of words and terms, but having a direct reference to those refined, and hardly consistent ideas, which arise in the human mind, when it considers local motion in an abstract view, together with the infinite divisibility of body, space, and time. It is difficult to conceive how motion is communicated from one body to another at rest, without a procedure of the impulse through all the minute parts of the latter ; and, therefore, there can be no instantaneous motion ; and, if a body be supposed in motion, it must also have progression ; and, from this circumstance, it must be absurdly conceived to come to the middle of the space it occupies before it gets to the end. But we forbear the detail of these studied contradictions to common reason, which, with some appearance of ingenuity, are no recommendations of the solidity of the metaphysical science : Yet in this field, as having reputation, Zeno chose to shine ; and, it is presumable, stretched his invention in framing arguments, of the truth or probability of which he entertained no belief. He was not accounted a sceptic, or one inclined to think in philosophy, or act in life, with that hesitation about truth, and that irresolution, or indifference as to action, which is acknowledged to accompany alike a sceptical and a feeble mind. On the contrary, he is said to have been most rational *, manly, and determined, in the general turn of his conceptions and sentiments ; and hence his bold enterprise, and his invincible constancy in suffering torments and death, in the vindication of civil liberty, has been often recited for the honour of philosophy.

But it would be an improper omission not to insert here his reasoning with respect to the eternity, unity, and incomparable excellency of the
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* Plato in *Parmenide* et in *Sophista*. Diogen. Laert. *ibid*.

supreme being, upon the supposition of his existence, as it is sketched by Aristotle; in which, although we may discern a strain of the argumentation that Xenophanes applied to the universe, there appears an accuracy of investigation on the subject that merits rehearsal. It is impossible, said he, speaking of the Deity *, that the *being which is*, can be generated; for, in things so produced, there is a necessity that they come either from things like, or those which are unlike; but both the one and the other supposition is equivocal, or contradictory; since a thing like may as well be conceived to generate its likeness, as to be generated of it; for, among things similar, there is a common and respective equality. Neither are unlike things generated from the unlike; for, whether we suppose the stronger to be made from the weaker, or the greater from the less, and the better from the worse; or, in the contrary way, the less excellent from those which are more so; upon either hypothesis it will follow, that *of a nonentity something is generated*. God, therefore, if he be, is not made, nor generated, but eternal; and, if eternal, he hath an excellence of being above all others; and therefore he is one. If there were two, or more, such as he, he would cease to be the most excellent. Among many gods, equal to one another, there can be no best; and to real divinity it is essential to surpass all others. To God, and the power of God, it belongs to have sway and to govern; and in him every perfection being equal to another, he sees, hears, and perceives all things with the same facility. Thus far does Zeno's conceptions of divinity proceed in a manner that is rational; and, considering the defects of the current philosophy of his time, worthy of approbation. But what follows, with respect to the figure of the divinity being round, and his being neither finite nor infinite, moveable nor quiescent, shows that he entangled himself with those subtle and perplexed ideas, by which the human mind in vain endeavours to rise to adequate views of the one only Being, who is infinite and eternal. Zeno is reckoned to have flourished about the 79th Olympiad.

We here introduce some sketches of the physical philosophy of Heraclitus and Empedocles, together with accounts of their other tenets, and

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* De Zenone.

of their characters, as philosophers, before we proceed, in the next section, to consider the principles of those called by the particular name of *Atomists*, or the Corpuscular Sect, of which Leucippus and Democritus were held to be the originals in Greece.

Heraclitus was a native of the city of Ephesus, in Asia Minor, and born in a condition of fortune that promised the enjoyment of wealth and power; but he early resigned these advantages, and betook himself to physiological study. In the prosecution of it, he either neglected, or despised, those helps to science, which the ablest geniuses must owe to the knowledge or discoveries of others before them. Upon this point, for some time at least, his saying was, that he knew nothing*; but he afterwards changed his language, and rather boasted of the universality of his knowledge. By much learning, said he, the mind is not really instructed; otherwise Hesiod, or Pythagoras, or Xenophanes, would have more exemplified its efficacy; but there is only one wisdom, and that peculiar to the mind, which consists in knowing "how, and when" "to govern all by all." This obscure sentence seems to have no meaning that is obvious but a political one; yet, as he uttered some things very mysteriously, it was constructed in various senses. That he held the administration of civil affairs, and especially of a popular government, in high esteem, appears from another sentence of his, "that every" "people ought to fight as much for their laws as for their walls;" and from his displaying, in some passages of his book on Nature, his skill in political science; yet he was restrained from the exercise of it in the Ephesian state, not only by his disposition to study, but by the treatment the Ephesians gave his friend Hermodorus, whom he had assigned for their legislator†, and they thought fit to banish. Indignation rose in his mind, naturally fastidious, and of a melancholy cast, to a height of rage. He pronounced all the Ephesians of adult years worthy of destruction for their shameful procedure; and also for the no less ignominious reason they alledged for it. "Let no man," said they, "who" "pretends to excel another live amongst us; but let him remove to" "some other place." Expressing, afterwards, on several occasions, his
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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. p. 550.

† Cicer. Tuscul. Quaest. lib. 5.

utter contempt of the understanding and manners of his countrymen, he secreted himself from them in the recesses of the temple of Diana. The acrimony of his temper increasing, he, who was never seen to indulge a smile, now deplored the miseries of mankind with constant tears. He recollected not then, in the impaired state of his mind, what is said to have been one of his apothegms *, “that a solitary man is either a God or a beast.” Or, perhaps, he preferred to it another, “that wisdom was something separated from all other things.”

In these dismal circumstances, his application to study, and to the composition of his book on Nature, must have been often interrupted. Accordingly, the chasms, or involved sentences of that work, were such, that, although, where intelligible, it was allowed to be excellent in matter and style, yet, in many places, as Socrates said, it required a Delian diver † to explore the depth of his meaning. His physical principles, so far as they are imperfectly traced by several authors, are reducible to the following particulars: That fire was the primary and sole element in nature, of which all things consisted ‡; that the compositions of other bodies, and their various phenomena, were explicable, not according to the known power of that element, to rarify, or to condense them, but from the different dilatations, and contractions of itself; that the apparent extinction of it, which was its grosser contraction, generated earth; which, loosed in its particles, was resolved into water; and from its exhalations, again, came air; that the natural world, being subjected to this vicissitude, would, at certain fatal periods, revert into, and be absorbed in fire, its original principle §. He defined fate to be *reason pervading universal nature*: In which assumption, he seems either to have deviated from that noted tenet of his followers, called Heraclitians, *that all things flowed, without coherence, like a river* ||, or stated a doctrine not

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reconcilable

* Stobaeus, Sentent. Mor. Sermo 3.

† Cicer. de Finib. lib. 2.

‡ Diogen. Laert. ibid.

§ Stobaei Eclogae Phys. lib. 1. p. 12.

De Placitis Philos. lib. 1. cap. 25.

|| In consequence of his theory, he

affirmed, that the same person could never go twice into a bath; and Cratylus, his disciple, said, not even once. The human soul, though allowed by him to be inexplicable, he held to be, like other things, in constant fluxion. Motion, he said, was

reconcilable with his other theory; if that implied, beside rejecting the testimony of the senses, the uncertainty and fallacy of all the perceptions, or judgments, of the human mind. Opinion he called the sacred disease. Yet he declared the human soul to be of a nature he could not, by all his study, comprehend. On several subjects, although opinionative, he expressed himself like a Pythagorean. "My body," said he, "is but the vilest dross; yet, such as it is, I shall treat it with some care, as long as God requires me to make use of it, as an instrument of action." But it is in vain to pretend to collect with exactness the philosophical tenets of a man, who, sometimes from affectation of singularity, and often from distemper, is acknowledged to have written many things in a contradictory, or an unintelligible strain. We shall only remark, that his choice of his physical principle, fire, as the constituent, and prime mover of the natural elements, showed discernment, and his manner of conceiving its action, a degree of ingenuity; and that it might be justly deemed to be more efficacious in the production of the varying qualities of bodies, and, therefore, more tenible in theory than any speculation upon the inferior elements, or the divisions of matter into its minutest parts. After all the searches that late ages have made into the *flamina* of bodies, and their action upon one another, it seems to be evinced, that an aetherial fluid, of the nature of fire, pervades them more universally, and produces more wonderful effects, than is found to be done by any known element. Heraclitus flourished about the 69th Olympiad, and was contemporary with the Persian monarch Darius Hystaspes, whose invitation to come to his court, he, with a tincture of philosophic pride, declined. He is said to have given a like refusal to a request of the Athenians.

Agrigentum, in Sicily, gave birth to Empedocles; and, in the judgment of the Roman poet Lucretius, more honour and celebrity was derived to the island from this circumstance, than from all the wonders of Nature it contained; although Charibdis roared on its coast, and *Ætna* flamed

no otherwise known but by motion. But, if it makes the uncertainty of knowledge, it is to be asked, How is motion itself known?—Aristot. de Anima, lib. 1. cap. 2. p. 419.

flamed in the midst of its domains. His encomiastic lines * are in a high strain of enthusiasm, especially coming from a philosophical poet, and, perhaps, in respect to the subject he treats, to that *nature of things he attempts to explain*, they may be reckoned both extravagantly and unjustifiably applied. Yet, it may be alledged in his excuse, that he only extols reason in the human breast as superior to all other exhibitions of it. It is no more, too, than one physical poet pouring incense on the admired works of another: There was, however, little correspondence in their philosophical tenets. The four elements were assumed by the Sicilian sage as the principles of all natural generations; yet Stobaeus †, and the author *de Placitis*, alledge, that he held certain minutiae of bodies, of similar parts, and round, to be antecedent to the formation of the elements, and, therefore, conjoin his doctrine with that of Epicurus, and other Atomists. But we know, with more certainty, that, to fire, or aether, water, earth, and air, he added the concomitant powers of *concord* and *discord*; and, giving the poetic names of Jupiter, Neftis, Juno, and Dis, or Pluto, to the several elements, he made all the productions and phaenomena of Nature to arise ‡ from their union or separation. According to him, there was properly no settled constitution of things; but the vicissitudes of junction and disjunction, of love and discord, everlastingly took place. So sung the bard of Agrigentum, in a poem of five thousand verses, including those he wrote on religious lustrations; and, while he gained much public admiration, he thought it the more allowable to applaud himself. In comparison with the Sicilians,

* Quorum Acragantinus cum primis Empedocles est,
Hic est vasta Charibdis, et hic Ætnaea minantur
Murmura——
Quae cum magna modis multis miranda videtur,
Gentibus humanis regio——
Nil tamen hoc habuisse viro praeclarius in se,
Nec sanctum magis, et mirum, carumque videtur.
Carmina quinetiam divini pectoris ejus
Vociferantur, et exponunt praeclara reperta,
Ut vix humana videatur stirpe creatus.

De Rer. Nat. lib. 1.

† De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 19.
p. 677. Diogen. Laert. lib. 8. p. 538.

‡ Aristot. Metaph. lib. 4.

lians, he styled himself a god, with his proper attribute of immortality ; so that Lucretius's panegyric, which asserts, that on account of his wonderful endowments, *he could hardly be thought sprung of the human race*, still fell short of the character he assumed. Sextus Empiricus thinking this frantic expression irreconcilable to his having common reason *, alleges that he could mean no more by it than some other philosophers, who said, that, possessing purity, and sanctity of mind, they had a god within them, or a receptacle fit for a deity.

His general principles, that have been mentioned, implied the doctrine, that things in the universe sometimes moved, and sometimes were at rest †. The one ensued, when, out of many things, or of the several elements, concord made one thing, which was improperly called generation ; and also, when, of one thing, discord made many things, as in what was termed their dissolution. Rest happened in the intervals of these two movements ; and, therefore, he reckoned that the world was not the same with the universe ; and that those parts only of the latter were called by the former name, which underwent the different influences of concord and disagreement. All the rest was matter unmoved, and in profound quiet. Whether in this state the natural elements existed at all, or how they lay together, or if they had any distinguishable form more than the chaos of the poets, we are left to conjecture. Yet, upon the hypothesis of their existing as many things, and not one thing, it must be presumed, that Concord was the first mover ; since Strife, her opposite, could only intervene, and divide that which before was one, and in a condition of harmony. But Empedocles, whom Aristotle pronounces ‡ rather a stumbling than an accurate reasoner, made his two principles convertible into each other, and contention to arise out of friendship, originally, and as much, as friendship out of contention ; so that the question about the first introduction of motion was rendered nugatory, or evaded.

Beside the two imaginary powers of concord and discord, Empedocles spoke of a one God, or deity, exempted from their influence ||, and not included

* Advers. Mathem. lib. 1. c. 13. p. 61.

† Aristot. Phys. lib. 8. c. 1. p. 319.

‡ Metaph. lib. 1. c. 4. p. 646.

|| Ibid. lib. 3. c. 4. p. 662.

included in the generations of other things ; and who, happy in himself, knew not contention. For, according to his philosophy, all knowledge proceeded from a *sense of like to like* * ; or, in plainer terms, from a participation of the element of any thing to the conception of it. Thus, said he, we know water, by water *in us* ; fire by fire ; earth by earth ; air by air ; and, in the same manner, friendship and contention. This was a short and easy account of a difficult point, the origin of our ideas. To render it complete, he made the human soul a compound of the four elements ; and hence it could not fail to have a special knowledge of each of them. But, without insisting on such superficial strains of his philosophy, we may here take occasion to repeat an observation already made, with respect to those called Physical Philosophers, and distinguished from the Atomical sect of them in Greece. We have Aristotle's testimony, that Empedocles did not comprehend, in his physical principles, the agency of that deity, whom he mentions as a separate and superior being to them, but discussed the whole constitution of things by a theory of sympathy and antipathy, agreement and aversion. It is most probable, that he did no more in this seclusion of his superior deity from any interference in the work, than what other philosophers, who professed to hold forth a physical system, thought themselves obliged to do, even when they admitted one eternal and ungenerated being, called God. Their invention and inquiry, they supposed, could not sufficiently appear, but by deducing from some of the natural elements, or by the fiction of certain ideal powers in the universe, the origin and formation of the worlds of beings, inanimate and animate, vegetable, brutal, rational, and intelligent. But how absurdly, and inconsistently, this task was performed, is evinced, not only from Empedocles's theory, but that of the several speculatists of the Ionic school, and others that have been examined. The Roman poet, Ovid, who appears, as well as Lucretius, to have been acquainted with the famous poem of the Sicilian bard, on the *nature and principles of things*, and whose notion of a *concordia discors* seems to be copied from it, is known, by every scholar, to desiderate a principle adequate to the arrangement of his *chaos*. It is a God, and a better

* Sextus Empiric. *ibid.*

better nature, than could be found in it *; but to which deity, in the catalogue of gods, the work was to be referred, he ventures not to declare, but leaves it doubtful; and, it is likely, in imitation of the authors he consulted.

With respect to the solutions Empedocles gives of the particular phenomena of Nature, or his notions of the heavens, and of the sun, moon, and stars, it is unnecessary to be particular. They are, in general, neither better nor worse than those of almost all the Grecian physiologists who preceded him; and, it may be added, of those who followed after him for several generations. His chrystalline heavens, with stars of fire fastened to them, while the planets were left loose, are equal to Heraclitus's flaming lamps, in the form of boats, nourished from the exhalations of the earth; and his sea, said to be the sweat squeezed from the earth by the sun's heat, is not so despicable as Xenophanes's fancy of cloudy stars, having their fires extinguished through the day, and lighted up every night. In the many absurd opinions adopted in physics and astronomy, by the ancient philosophers, for a succession of ages, we have a convincing demonstration how ineffectual to proper discoveries, upon these subjects, all efforts of imagination must prove; and that, while men of genius contented themselves with the common aspects of things around them, without attentive and continued observations on their various appearances, the theories formed by them about the celestial bodies, and their motions, or even the properties and qualities of the terrestrial ones, could differ little from the conceptions of the vulgar; and, if they exceeded the latter in fancy, they could only equal them in truth. The detail, therefore, of these reveries, we have, in a great measure, avoided; and shall forbear, in decent regard to the name of philosophy.

It yet remains to add some remarks on the common report of the manner in which the Sicilian philosopher was said to have made his exit, by a tremendous leap into the burning jaws of *Ætna* †. The act is

* Sic ubi dispositam, *quisquis fuit* ille deorum,
Congeriem secuit, sectamque in membra redegit.

Metamorph. lib. 1. § 2.

† Lucian. Dial. de Morte Peregrini. Diogen. Laert. ibid. lib. 8.

is allowed to have passed in a clandestine way; and that the detection of it ensued by the singular accident of one of his brazen sandals being thrown out by the mountain, and so small a reliet of him being found entire. He was not known to be liable to any natural phrenzy; but the vanity he often showed in performing amazing feats, by medicine, and expelling epidemical distempers and plagues, taken together with the language he held with respect to himself, as a being of a superior condition to mortal men, constituted a presumption, if not a clear proof, that he had recourse to this stratagem, although the most audacious one, to establish the belief he had in the course of his life laboured to excite, of his being an immortal divinity, and, therefore, was removed in some supernatural way out of the world. Such is the summary of the charge against Empedocles, as an impostor of the first magnitude, and who could encounter death in any form, rather than not attain his favourite object; to which, as he had many accusers, some satirical one might subjoin, according to Horace's insinuation *, that being accounted a dramatic, as well as a physical poet, he might think himself entitled to the liberty allowed the former, of managing, in the manner he pleased, *his exit from the drama*. In his vindication, the alledged account of his death is declared, by several authors of credit, to be altogether a fiction, which had been raised upon no other voucher, incident, or circumstance, but that of there being no certain record of the time or place in which he died; and that no sepulchre or monument was found erected to him at Agrigentum. For this a reason was given, that having taken a journey into the Peloponnesus of Greece, he never returned, but died there; or, as Phavorinus related it, at Messina, after a public solemnity, by a fall from his chariot. Strabo †, entering gravely into the question, declares it to be his opinion, that Empedocles could not have accomplished his death in the manner represented, by throwing himself into the dreadful vorago of the mountain, whence, when the fiery eruptions ceased, a violent wind blew constantly, and with

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force

* ——— Ardentem frigidus Ætnam
Infiliiit; sit jus liceatque perire poetis.

HORAT. de Arte Poet.

† Strab. lib. 8.

force sufficient to repel the near approach of any human being. From the contradictory assertions, as to facts, on the part of the arraigners, and defenders, the question appears to be thrown back, for resolution, upon the general character of Empedocles; whether, in his behaviour as a man and a citizen, he could be deemed to have carried his vanity, and affectation of divine honours, to the pitch of extravagance alledged against him. Here, too, the evidence has its counter parts. Many of his public actions attested him to be humane, temperate, liberal, and beneficent, and so moderate and un aspiring, as to secular dignity and honour, that he refused the principality of Agrigentum, when offered to him. On the other hand, it is not denied that he discovered excessive ostentation and vanity in the attire of his person, in his equipage for all public appearances, and, upon some occasions, did not decline accepting the rituals allotted to a divinity. Upon this admitted circumstance of his conduct, he has been much more condemned than acquitted; and, to the censure or ridicule of his affectation in life, the belief of the last act of his insane ambition, although by no means proved, has been generally added.

Aristotle, as Diogenes Laertius reports, reckoned Empedocles one of the earliest founders of the rhetorical art. His delivering his philosophy in a poem was no singularity; but rather, after Hesiod's example, such composition of their works was often preferred by the philosophers of several succeeding generations. The systems of Xenophanes and Parmenides, and some others, were also composed in the stile of the muses. The period of Empedocles's birth and death is among the unfixed points in chronology; and it can only be said, with certainty, that he flourished between the 75th and 80th Olympiad.

S E C T.

SECTION II.

Of the Atomical Philosophy,—and the Physical Theories of Leucippus and Democritus.

WE inquire not here, when or where the atomical philosophy first took its rise; whether in Phoenicia, or in Greece; or what credit is due to the report mentioned by Posidonius, of its having a Sidonian original, from a philosopher of that nation, called Moschus, who lived before the war of Troy. Strabo *, and Sextus Empiricus, both take notice of this tradition; which has given occasion to various conjectures of the learned about the name and country of Moschus. Leucippus and Democritus were allowed to be the first Grecian adepts in this physical theory; and certain it appears, that no system of it was formed in any of the schools of Greece at an earlier period than their appearance. We shall not, therefore, examine, with some authors, whether its origin, in that country, may be traced to Pythagoras's *monads*, under the interpretation of *atoms*, or to like glosses on the obscurities of other philosophers; but shall only premise, to the view to be taken of the atomical theories of these two philosophers, a remark on the state of physical knowledge, among the Greeks, about the periods in which they are reckoned to have flourished.

We have already stated in what range of science the forward genius of the Greeks chiefly displayed itself; and how those called physical philosophers among them were little more than mere speculatists upon

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the

* Lib. 16. Sextus Emp. lib. 8. p. 367.

the natural elements, as they appeared, without any course of observations or experiments being instituted, for discovering the natures and qualities of bodies. Amongst all their cities, or states, there was no public provision made for physiological study; and their philosophers, beside the different bent of their genius, were, with the exception of two or three, in no condition to undertake, and much less to prosecute this task, to the improvement of science. As interludes, or concomitant entertainments of the Olympic games, exhibitions of the scientific, or literary kind, were introduced; but the subjects of them were either inventions in some of the practical arts, or specimens of the more ingenious ones, such as poetry, music, painting, rhetoric, and history. To productions in the more abstract sciences, or disquisitions in physics, they could not be extended; and, although we have it to narrate, that Democritus read, in a public assembly, one of his physical treatises, it was a singular and dangerous experiment; since any cosmogony, inconsistent with the received theology, was more likely to have excited indignation, and procured banishment to its author, than obtained applause or reward. From these circumstances, Physics, properly so called, could not be cultivated in Greece, but in an inadequate and superficial manner; and the few of their philosophers who were inclined to more diligent investigations in that science, were more especially obliged to resort to the colleges of foreign countries, for information and progress in it; an attainment which must have proved as slow as it was laborious. Democritus appears to have given more application to this study, and, by what he learned abroad, to have been more intelligent in it than all his physical predecessors. It must be added, that he was not followed, or but indifferently, by any class of Grecian philosophers, for a long series of time, in this painful tract of knowledge; and, until Calisthenes *, at the request of Aristotle, and by the concurring favour and munificence of Alexander, made that immense collection of the vegetable, and animal, and other species of natural bodies, from the various regions which the Macedonian prince over-ran, as a conqueror, and also transmitted those records of astronomical observations, which had

* Plin. Hist. Natur. lib. 8. c. 9.

had been kept for many centuries by the Chaldeans of Babylon, it may be justly reckoned, that the proficiency of the Greeks in these subjects was inconsiderable, and did not much exceed that of the nations, which, in other respects, compared with them, were accounted rude and illiterate. Even those tables of observations on the motions of the celestial bodies, adapted as they were to discoveries in astronomy, and to the correction of many errors in chronology and history, seem to have been little consulted, or turned to small account in science, until the reigns of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and the establishment of the Alexandrine school.

The vague account given of the time in which Leucippus appeared, and the uncertainty * of the place of his birth, and where, or under whom he studied, may be considered as a confirmation of what has been said about the ambiguity of the origin of the Atomical philosophy in Greece. The explication of his theory of atoms, or imperceptibly small particles of matter, and a *void*, has been commonly delivered by authors under the name and recommendation of Democritus's more explicit and improved system of them. We might therefore omit the short sketch of Leucippus's cosmogony, which we find in Diogenes Laertius, or consider it only in connection with the doctrine and principles of his more celebrated follower, and disciple. But, as there appears to be an invention and ingenuity in it, which induced at least one learned author † in the last century to contend, that it must have suggested to Descartes the first idea of his *vortices*, and that Leucippus may not forfeit to another the share of reputation due to him, we shall state in what manner he conceived that a globe, such as our terrestrial one, might be formed, upon his only assumed principles of an infinity of atoms, and a *vacuum*. "After the floating motion, which he supposes the former ever to have had in the latter, it must have happened, that some of the atoms, reckoned to be of various figures and shapes, would come closer together, and be separated from the rest; and that, by their huddle upon one another, a sort of rolling, or tossing about of them in the empty space,

* Diog. Laert. lib. 9. p. 566. Aristot. de Generat. lib. 1.
Huetius Avaranch. Episcop. In Censura Philosophiae Cartesiana.

† Daniel

space, would be occasioned. In consequence of this, hitting against one another; and now some, and now others, prevailing to carry them in different directions, those which were alike would come at length to encounter with their like, and, leaving the atoms in disparity to them, settle more easily in a consistent form; but, being of equal weight, and their mass of vast magnitude, they could not revolve, until such of them as were placed upon the extremities, being less pressed together, recoiled, or *leaped back again* into the vacuum. Upon this incident, a rotation would ensue in the remaining body of the atoms, which now clinging faster to one another, would form the first concretion of them in a globular shape. There would be produced upon its revolving superficies, a kind of skin, or subtile membrane, inclosing within it all varieties of atoms; but, as it would rather wear thinner, than become more gross, from their constant attrition and motion, it would serve, chiefly, to attract greater numbers of them from without towards their middle aggregate; which, by this means, would be more condensed, and gradually acquire the solidity and firmness of the body of the earth." In this essay of Leucippus, towards the formation of a revolving globe, with his atoms having self-motion, although there be not precision, or sufficient accuracy shown about the laws of moving bodies, yet, making some allowance upon this point, and comparing it with what we are further to learn from the theories of Democritus and Epicurus, the signal improvers of the Atomical system, it cannot be reckoned a despicable part, but rather the most plausible one, of their doctrine. This may be allowed, more especially if we consider what is intimated, but not distinctly expressed, about the atoms on the extremities of their mass flying off, when its revolution ensued; which presents an idea or conception of that great principle in mechanics, since so much illustrated, by which every body moving round its axis is found to have a constant tendency to recede from, as well as to press towards its centre. It was this interpretation, given by Huetius to the passage we have quoted from Diogenes Laertius, that afforded some ground for his argument, that the French philosopher, instead of being the inventor of his theory of the *vortices*, had taken the hint of it from the cosmogony of Leucippus and Democritus.

This

This last philosopher, who had so great a name in antiquity, was commonly reputed a native of Abdera in Thrace. The opulence of his father was reputed to have enabled him to receive, and furnish entertainment for some days, to Xerxes, and part of his army, discomfited, and fugitive from Greece *. The monarch is said to have left, at the request of his hospitable entertainer, two or three of the Persian magi, with the charge of instructing his sons in their sciences. That Osthanes, a chief of the magi, whom Pliny mentions † as an attendant of the expedition, might be one of the number, seems not very probable. But that several of that order were dispersed in Greece, with the view of making prosylites to their theology, and that the Greeks became at this period better, and more generally acquainted with the Persian and Chaldaic knowledge in astronomy, and divination by the stars, and were particularly captivated with their performances in the magical art, is sufficiently attested. Democritus, therefore, in the years of puerility ‡, received from his Persian preceptors some elements of literature, if not of science; and, most probably, what was more suited to his age, and more useful in his subsequent peregrinations, a preparation for learning the Asiatic languages. But, whatever his youthful and domestic improvements may be reckoned, he soon discovered the ardent thirst of his mind after science. He was the youngest of three brothers; and, when their paternal inheritance came to be divided, he made choice of that share which appeared rather the least valuable, but could most readily be reduced into money. It amounted to a hundred talents; a large fortune for a private person, but which he accounted inconsiderable to be expended in the pursuit of science §, and the attainment of the nobler treasure of wisdom and knowledge, which philosophic study affords to the inquisitive mind. After attending Leucippus, and other Grecian masters, he resolved to gratify to the utmost his favourite passion, and, it may be said, the only one by which he was ever known to be actuated. Taking a course similar to what many of the Grecian

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. p. 579.

† Hist. Nat. lib. 30. in Prooemio de

Magic.

‡ Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. p. 579.

§ Cicero de Finib.

lib. 5. p. 107.; et Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 5. p. 197.

sages had pursued, he passed, of a long life, full forty years in Phoenicia, Egypt, Chaldea, and in the Persian and Indian territories.

With what proficiency in knowledge, and high entertainment to himself, he made these peregrinations, may be understood from what he declared, in a kind of exultation or triumph, upon his return *, "That, of all men of his time, he had been the greatest traveller, had conversed with more of the sages and learned, in different countries, and made the most inquiries, in philosophy; and that, in the demonstration of lines and figures, not even those of the Egyptians, called *Arpedonaptæ*, could excel him." Instructed he was in every species of science; in mathematics, physics, ethics, and in all the liberal arts; but more particularly conversant in the knowledge of natural bodies, and their compositions, and of what might be effected by their analysis †, and the commixture of their minutest particles. He owed to the priests of Memphis that instruction in astronomy ‡, which enabled him to pronounce the *galaxy* in the heavens a *co-appearance* of stars. To what account he turned, in his voluminous writings, the materials of information he had access to, and the communications in science he received, we may judge from what Pliny says § of the use he made of the books of Apollonices and Dardanus, Phoenician authors, upon whom he wrote commentaries; but so partially, as to leave room for publications of his own upon their general principles and doctrine. This practice, the Roman physiologist observes, was not uncommon among the Grecian philosophers, who might be said not only to have travelled abroad, but, several of them, to have gone into exile for many years, in order to acquire, for the benefit of their countries, every known art or science; and, therefore, might justly think their pains and expence ought to be productive of some reputation, as well as emolument to themselves. *Magic*, indeed, in the vulgar acceptation of the word ||, was what they were principally understood to have learned in their foreign excursions; but it was well known to the philosophers themselves, and to all the learned

* Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stroma* 1. *Ælian. Variæ Hist.*
Epist. 30. † Diodor. Siculus, lib. 2. § Ibid.

‡ Seneca,
|| Suidas.

in Voce.

learned, in what sense that word was taken in the countries they visited, and that it denominated the science of natural philosophy, and that part of it, especially, which led either to useful, or surprising discoveries, in the qualities of bodies.

Upon returning to Abdera, Democritus found that he had incurred a penal law of the city, which excluded, from the right of sepulchre *, every one who, like him, could be proved to have consumed, in an unaccountable manner, his whole patrimony. To shun this mark of ignominy, and to gain favour with his countrymen, he either availed himself of the common opinion, that a philosopher, such as he was, could foretel future events, and ventured to emit certain predictions with respect to them, which only to vulgar understandings could be accounted supernatural; or else †, he imagined he had attained, by his converse with the magi, the art of divination. Two of his presages are recorded by Pliny ‡, which, although wonderful, rather than miraculous, produced such an effect upon the minds of the people, as surpassed his most sanguine hopes. With an unanimous voice, they proclaimed him *wisdom* itself, and offered him divine honours. While under this favourable prepossession, he took the liberty to produce, and read in their assembly, a famous work of his, which had the title of the great *Diocosmos*; and began §, *Here I discourse of all things*. As it must have unfolded the principles of that atomical philosophy he meant to introduce, he may be reckoned fortunate, not only in the admiration he excited of his wisdom among the Abderites, but also in their profound ignorance; which made them applaud what they did not in the least understand. Beholding him now with the utmost veneration, and calling him their oracle, and the ornament of their city, they replaced his exhausted patrimony, and insisted that he should preside in the public government. Nothing could be more contrary to his inclination, taste, and habits, which were uniformly and incessantly turned to physical inquiries and experiments. To prosecute these, he withdrew from one recess to another; and,

* Diog. Laert.
lib. 18. cap. 28.
pag. 24.

† Cicero de Divinat. lib. 1. pag. 255.

‡ Hist. Nat.

§ Hic loquor de universis. Cicer. Academ. Quæst. lib. 4.

and, finding he could not altogether avoid interruption, he retired from the city, and shut himself up among the sepulchres and tombs.

Perhaps there could not be a more striking instance of the alienation of the human mind, possessed of reason, from all its natural and ordinary affections. Hardly sensible to hunger, unwearied in vigilance, composed in his dismal and dreary abode, and regardless of all other objects but those with which his mind was occupied *, he passed many days and nights almost entirely either in reading, writing, and contemplation, or in the analysing of plants, and the dissection of birds. Before he betook himself to this last retreat, the Abderites, when they came to consult him, upon any public or private emergency, were often mortified by his replying to them only with a contemptuous grin, or fits of laughter, even when they reported what was calamitous or distressful. He became now more addicted to this strange manner of receiving their complaints. Insult designed they could not interpret his behaviour to be; but it bore all the appearance of insanity of mind. A deploring epistle was sent to Hippocrates, requesting his presence. The father of physic came; and, notwithstanding the first approach to such a patient was perplexing, and the conference was frequently interrupted by bursts of laughter from Democritus, for which no occasion appeared to be given, but rather such as should naturally have produced an opposite emotion, he was pronounced by no means deprived of reason; and that, on the contrary, he ought to be ranked among the wisest of men. Democritus, however, supported, before his physician, a thesis, with which he had often confounded the Abderites, that the distresses of mankind, considered as arising from their follies or vices, was an allowable, and just subject of derision.

Here a comparison has been often introduced by authors, upon the contrasted sentiment of Democritus and Heraclitus; between the philosopher whose laughter was provoked by the observation or recital of the troubles and woes befalling men; and the other, who shed tears of vexation, mixed with pity, upon beholding their gross errors and misfortunes. Upon which side the humanity lay is obvious. But as, in
Heraclitus,

* Lucian in *Philopendes*.

Heraclitus, it appeared to be disease more than sentiment; and in Democritus's case, notwithstanding Hippocrates's favourable declaration, a touch of distemper may be suspected; the comparison between their moral feelings is of less significance: Yet, if a question is to be stated, upon the supposition of their being unaffected by any perceptible malady of body or mind, it should be *this*; What is the difference, in point of absurdity, and want of common reflection, between one, who, like Heraclitus, should be displeased, and vexed to anger and tears, with the generality of mankind, because he could not bring them to think as he did, upon subjects not levelled to their conceptions; and another, who, like Democritus, should entertain such a sense of his superiority over them, in the choice he had made of his studies and pursuits in life, and in the extensive knowledge he had acquired, as to be persuaded that the common aims and understandings of all the rest of men in the world were contemptible and ridiculous, the sources of trouble, and, according to their management of them, the occasions of their many calamities and sufferings; for all which prevailing folly they were to have none of his pity, but as much of his scorn and derision as he could show them? To imagine that the bulk of mankind were to be converted into speculative philosophers, or otherwise to be bewailed; or, while they acted in the necessary employments of life, and on the theatre of the world, that they were to divest themselves of every passion, and become as indifferent to the parts of the scene they had to perform as a philosopher, who had withdrawn himself from all concern in them, and, if they did not, to be accounted ridiculous, seems, in common reason, to approach nearly to the same absurdity. But we come to the display of Democritus's atomical theory.

In the opinion of Horace*, Democritus, from his incessant pursuit of knowledge, might be reckoned *a soul without a body*; and yet he embraced the corpuscular philosophy. Much conversant as he was with the Pythagorean, and other sects of Greece, he preferred to them all

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* Lib. 1. Epist. 1.—12.

——Democriti pecus edit agellos,
Cultaque; dum peregrè est *animus sine corpore* velox.

the doctrine of Leucippus, which he made it his great study to illustrate and improve. Its only principles were atoms, or an *ens* full and solid, and another having rarity, and called a *void* *; and although, where the former was, the latter could not be, and, in this respect, was a non-ens, yet entity, and corporeity, were alike predicated of both; neither was the one generated of the other; but the two, ever co-existing, became the cause of all other things. The solid consisted of an infinite number of separate particles, indivisibly small †, and of different figures; and yet, among these atoms of bodies, there was to be conceived some difference of weight, according as they might exceed one another in solidity, or superficial extension. In all other respects, they were destitute of every quality, and, taken separately, were neither moist nor dry, cold or hot, black or white, bitter or sweet, but only capable, in certain conditions, of producing these perceptions in other beings. In general, it was argued, that bodies must either be originally constituted of atoms, or of nothing; for, allowing every body to be divisible, and that division to proceed to the utmost possible length, it must come to atoms, or to nothing; and, therefore, there could be no original for any body but atoms ‡. Motion innate, and from necessity, and amounting to a kind of animation, was ascribed to every individual atom; so that in the infinite void, where there was no distinction of height or depth, length or breadth, they could move alike in all imaginable directions. Solid and infrangible as they were supposed, and capable of impinging upon one another, and rebounding, it was reckoned that their diverse figures, round, angular, straight, crooked, smooth, and pointed, would, after repeated collisions, enable them to unite into various masses, and firmly to cohere. After this manner, Democritus alledged, not only that numberless globes of atoms might be formed, and rolled about, but that the elements of fire and water, earth and air, together with all the qualities of bodies, which other philosophers supposed to be compounds, or trans-

mutations

* Aristot. Métaph. lib. 1. cap. 4. p. 6.
 lib. 1. cap. 1.—2. p. 314.—315.
 Eato, p. 305. De Placitis Philosoph. cap. 4.
 p. 748.

† Ibid. de Generat. et Corrupt.
 ‡ Cicero de Finib. lib. 1. p. 41.; et de
 Aristot. de Anima, lib. 1. cap. 2.

mutations of these elements, required no other principles of their generation or corruption, but those of the concurrence or dissipation of atoms.

In these barren principles, aided as they were by supposed motion, he could not pretend to find any other energies than what arose from the different positions and cohesions of his atoms *. He therefore acknowledged what was so evident; and expressed all the powers of his elements of bodies, by three differences; one of figure, another of order, and a third of position; which were by him alphabetically represented thus, A and N, A N, and N A, and N and Z †. But his philosophy furnished him with a resource, which abridged the difficult account he had to give of the qualities of bodies, from these three accidents to atoms. He denied that qualities existed in the things themselves; and asserted, that their apparency was to be referred to the human sensations, which modified them so as to make men imagine they had an existence, real and external to them; while they judged not from what they understood to be true, but only from what they perceived ‡. In any thing compounded, said he, the accession of the least heterogeneous particle suffices to make it appear different; and, as the transposition of the letters in a book may vary the reading from a tragedy to a comedy, so, it is to be conceived, that hot and cold, sweet and bitter, white and black, are no otherwise distinct properties of bodies, than as their atoms, or smallest particles, may be differently disposed; and the latter being infinite in number, their variations may be extended to any length. He therefore concluded, that qualities of bodies had their existence only in opinion; and that atoms, differently combined in a *vacuum*, were all that could be deemed real entities, and the principles of all other things.

In consequence of these positions, he was generally understood to have excluded from the universe every incorporeal and intelligent principle, or substance, unless what was called such might be constituted of atoms.

But

* Aristot. Metaph. lib. 1. cap. 4.
and concurrence, reckons five atomical powers in the line,

Concurfus, motus, positura, ordo, figura.

A and N differ in figure, A N, and N A, in order, N and Z in position.

† Arist. de Gener. lib. 1. cap. 2. p. 305.

‡ Lucretius, taking in motion.

But in this judgment there is an uncertainty, not only from his admitting an animating principle in his atoms necessary, but unexplained, and affirming, according to the author *de placitis* *, that every thing had a soul, but also from his entertaining a conception of certain phantoms and images, of a nature and power above corporeal, which reflected from external objects, conveyed awful impressions to human minds. These, indeed, he could not well describe; but fluctuated in his opinion †, as Cicero says, with respect to them and the gods. Sometimes he represents such images as endowed with a divine nature; and then he calls principles of things, and minds in the world, gods. Again, he holds it, that there must be either particular animated images that do good and harm to men, or vast ones, of immensity sufficient to embrace, exteriorly, the whole world. Such gross, and incoherent fictions, adds the Roman academician, might be worthy of the people of Abdera, but discredit the name of a philosopher, so highly extolled as Democritus. Much the same account of his *apparitions* ‡ is given by Sextus Empiricus, who subjoins, that he conceived them to predict, vocally, future events to men; and hence, as some were benevolent, and some malicious, he prayed that he might meet with those of favourable speech and aspect. He therefore much commended the institution of *auspices* for divination. If we had not striking instances of the contradictory opinions entertained in human minds, and those, too, of eminent penetration and acuteness, and if it were not apparent that this philosopher generally discovered a leaning towards the belief of supernatural presages, and of his own skill in them, we might be apt to conclude, that all this announcement about unintelligible phantoms and visions, was only affected, and a sort of conjuration, in the philosophic style, which he industriously employed, in order to hold forth certain fictitious images of things, equivalent to the popular notions of the gods, and to conceal his own total disbelief of any such superior beings. Yet, upon considering, that he, who proposed to write of all things, without exception of any, in the universe, acknowledged that obscurities often occurred, and that truth,

* Aristot. de Generat. lib. 1. cap. 2. p. 305.
lib. 1. p. 210.

Cicero, de Nat. Deor.

‡ Adversus Mathem. lib. 8. p. 311.

truth, in most cases *, might be said to be hid in a depth not to be explored, we can hardly suppose that he had formed a direct and positive opinion against the existence of incorporeal and divine substances. It seems evident that he only laboured through physical enquiries, but pretended not, which Epicurus afterwards did, to have so far completed them, as to become a dogmatist upon a particular system †. The report of his having deprived himself of sight, by means of a shield, or brass plate, opposed to the hottest rays of the sun, in order to be more recollected in meditation, is not very credible, as a voluntary act; but might readily befall him accidentally in the course of his various experiments. If we suppose that his eyes were not so totally blinded, but that some gleams of light might fall upon them, so as to occasion a vibration of the nerves, he might then be sensible to visions of things, in unnatural and fantastic forms, of which if he had any previous fancy, his belief of their reality, and fearful appearances, would be confirmed and increased.

In the production of the four elements, he chose to make fire consist of round atoms only ‡, as that figure seemed to him the fittest to pervade other masses of them, and, together with soul, which was accounted a species of fire §, to diffuse its influence among them. Air, water, earth, he no other way defined, but by their being great or little atoms, which, by their concretions, became a kind of recipient, or vehicle of the motions of the rest ||. In one principle of his physical theory, he contradicted the doctrine of all the other philosophers, by asserting that different things could not act upon, or suffer from one another; and that every agent, and patient, must always have sameness or similarity. When referred to general observation and experience, as contrary to his assertion, his reply was evasive, by alledging, that, although there were a difference apparent in many instances, there still might be found in them a latent similarity. But, without insisting upon his frivolous arguments in support of this doctrine, and his lame solutions of several difficult

* Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4.

† Ibid. de Finibus, lib. 5.

‡ Aristot. de Coelo, lib. 3. cap. 4. p. 375.

§ Ibid. de Anima, lib. 1.

cap. 2. p. 479.

|| Ibid. de Gener. lib. 1. cap. 7. pag. 395.

difficult phenomena from it, we shall now take a more precise and critical view of the general principles of his atomical theory.

It holds forth an hypothesis for resolving the question about the origin and constitution of worlds in the universe, which may be found liable, upon examination, to more objections than almost any other, that excited considerable attention and regard in the schools of philosophy. It assumes a species of body, or corporeal quantity, called *atoms*, which being supposed void of every property, but figure and solidity, with weight, can hardly be conceived possible, and never can be known actually to exist. Their imaginary existence, as the utmost sections of bodies, is contradictory to the infinite divisibility of matter or body, a conception which must attend every idea of extension or quantity. What then are atoms more than unknown and occult quantities of matter, introduced instead of occult qualities in it, to account for the production of visible and qualified substances?

But, if the concession should be made, that, in the actual division of matter, there must * be an indivisible point, or *ultimatum*, unless we proceed to infinity of division, or from something to nothing, the hypothesis is still loaded with an inconsistency, by the assignment of an infinite number of atoms, in correspondence to the infinite void. Is an infinitely great number more possible, or more conceivable, than a quantity infinitely small? If neither of them is comprehensible, they are both to be rejected; but if one of them enters into the supposition, where quantity is the subject, the other cannot be excluded. If, again, it should be allowed that atoms, although indivisible, were not like mathematical points, which only form a line, but had figure and magnitude, in the smallest conceivable degree, so as only to imply their solidity and infrangibility, yet their figures being supposed of that immense variety as to extend to all those competent to body, they could hardly be reckoned to fall short of infinite; and thus their number being put also under that denomination, it would follow, infinity might be superadded to infinity. But it is sufficient to observe, upon this head, the absurdity of an hypothesis, which insisted upon an infinite *full*, as it was called, or such a corporeity

* Aristot. de Coelo, lib. 3. cap. 4.

corporiety of atoms, and the like extent of a void. Yet this was a part of the theory so fundamental, that Epicurus gave his reasons why it could not be relinquished *. For, said he, if the vacuum was supposed infinite, and the atoms not, then the latter, ever in motion, might be dispersed, and in a manner lost, in endless and unefficient boundings in empty space. If, again, the atoms were infinite in multitude, and the void limited in its latitude, the former would not find place sufficient for their existence, and their various motions. But, if it was necessary to frame his hypothesis so as to avoid these consequences, he should have also adverted to what would follow from this provision; and that he might be asked †, In what respect did an infinite void, divided by infinite points of solidity, differ from a plenum? Unless he made the figures of his atoms infinite, the difference could not be such as to afford room for their motion; and thus, unless impossibilities were allowed to proceed in a train, the hypothesis was contradictory, and subversive of itself.

All the known qualities of bodies, cold, heat, moisture, dryness, softness, hardness, and all the degrees of them observable in nature, were reckoned to proceed solely from the figures, and by means of the transpositions of atoms, which were things in themselves immutable ‡. The doctrine, that qualities could be ascribed to mathematical, or geometrical figures, was a strange one, and unknown in philosophy. Certain properties, essential to them, these figures were allowed to have, and which, being traced, proved them to be what they were, severally in themselves, and as they might be distinguished from, or found equal to, but not the same with, one another. The properties of the square were not compared with those of the circle, nor their figures demonstrated to be contrary to, but only to be distinct from, each other. But the theory not only supposed qualities of bodies to be produced from atoms unqualified, but contrary ones, from their figures, which had no contraries. To palliate, or get rid of this absurdity, it was maintained, that these qualities had no existence in the things themselves, but that,

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 10. p. 691.
lib. 1. cap. 5. p. 396.

† Aristot. de Generat. et Corrupt.
‡ Ibid. lib. 4. cap. 8.

by certain modifications which objects underwent in the organs of sense, and by perception, they were illuſively repreſented to man. But, according to Democritus, perception itſelf was no more than a configuration of atoms. How, then, could any peculiarity be aſcribed to figures in perception, which, ſeparate from it, was incompetent to them? What could be imagined in round atoms, which, by themſelves, were ſaid to engender fire, to make them productive of the quality of heat, or to impreſs the perception of it on the human ſenſes, more than pyramidical ones, or other ſuppoſeable figures of them, could do? To derive the qualities of bodies, in this manner, from atoms even of one figure, was equivalent to a generation of them from no cauſe, or nothing.

The aſſumption of motion to the atoms unaccounted for, unauthoriſed in reaſon, and without being reckoned a principle in the univerſe, was a manifeſt proof of the ſtretches neceſſary for ſupporting an ill digeſted theory. Democritus *, as well as Leucippus, not only gave them motion, but in ſuch latitude, and ſo undetermined, that they might be ſaid to leap about, or to be deſpatched around, to perform every energy he thought proper for them. Other philoſophers, who preceded him, generally thought themſelves obliged to point out ſome cauſe of it in bodies, or, at leaſt, to adopt it, as found in conjunction with the natural elements they inſiſted upon; as in thoſe of air, water, or fire. But how it ſhould be connected with a multitude of infrangible atoms, was in no reſpect evident. Hence Plato, Ariſtotle, and other ſucceeding philoſophers, accuſed the Atomiſts, whom it leaſt became, of evading this point of inquiry, or of treating it in a moſt cuſſory manner. They, by this means, avoided other queſtions that were relative to the explication of it as a principle; and eſpecially that important one, whether it might be held coeval with matter, or had its origin in ſoul, or mind, the only ſelf-moving powers known in the univerſe? Epicurus, as if ſenſible of this deficiency in Democritus's theory, and how unfuitable it was to be found in a phyſical ſyſtem, endeavoured to ſupply it, by aſcribing motion in the atoms † to their natural weight, or *gravity*. But, in his account of the origin of the world, a principle of gravity was unintelligible;

* Ariſtot. de Anima, lib. 1. cap. 2. et 3.

† Diogen. Laert. ibid.

gible; and, when granted him, he perverted, in the strangest manner, the idea of its operation.

The solidity of atoms, and that degree of it which rendered them infrangible, was another arbitrary position; but which could not be dispensed with, in the hypothesis, lest the worlds made of them should fall into nothing. The cohesion of the particles of matter, although a surprising phenomenon, when attentively considered, was, indeed, much overlooked in the ancient philosophy. It was regarded as the simple effect of their condensation, as if attended with a compressive force; but whence this came, in the wonderful measure, with which the particles of hard masses of matter are found to attract one another, was hardly stated as a physical question. The license taken in the hypothesis was the more obvious, from the atoms being found in a *vacuum*, where there could be no atmosphere, or shadow of body, to operate their condensation, and far less their irrefrangibility. Of the most solid masses of matter, there are none known in which pores are not discoverable; and, therefore, an absolute solid and infrangible one, may be concluded an unphysical substance. Thus the whole hypothesis of atoms indissoluble, indefinitely figured, indiscriminately moved, was a creation of ideal substances, endowed with inconsistent and unaccountable properties; and yet unfounded, and from nothing, as their supposed existence was; the work to be performed by them, and alledged to have been accomplished in the constitution of the world, by their accidental and fortuitous motions and collisions, may be proved a phenomenon no less wonderful than the reality of their existence under the predicaments that have been mentioned. From their attribute of solidity, the atoms would be more apt, upon contact, to repel from one another than to cohere; and it could only be those of particular figures which could form combinations; so that the comparison of their transpositions, such as might be made in the letters of a book, was, in some respect, inadequate. For, every movement of the letters would have some effect to alteration, and but rarely one of the same significance, while repeated collisions of the atoms would often have none. But if, admitting the comparison, we should suppose it might happen, in the last degree of all conceivable possibilities, that the letters of the Greek alphabet, shifting constantly in

all manner of positions and transpositions, and in a long protracted series of these, might produce sometimes intelligible, as well as unintelligible, combinations of words, and at length hit upon such a train of them as would present a poem, like the Iliad or Odyssey; yet, even this utterly incredible effect of chance would not be equal to that of the world, such as it is, being produced by the casual motions of atoms. It would be inferior to it, in proportion as the varied combinations of the particles of matter in the universe must be allowed to exceed, in multiplicity, the transpositions of letters to be found in any one book, or, it may be said, in those of all the books in the world.

Beside transmitting, in his writings, that physical theory which Epicurus, from his more systematic compilement of it, called his own, Democritus appears also to have suggested to that philosopher the distinguishing * principle of his *ethics*. He did not, indeed, make pleasure the supreme end of human action, or felicity to consist in the attainment of it, but in a state of mind, which he called its *right form*, or *well-being* †; and which was attended with a tranquility undisturbed by any fearful superstitions, or passionate emotions. Epicurus, explaining his supreme good, defined it nearly in the same manner, admitting body to its share in the tranquility. In the collection of Democritus's apothegms, by Stobaeus, there are several of them converted into *topics* in Epicurus's moral dissertations. In place of them all, we shall only recite ‡ the story of Democritus's intercourse with the Persian monarch, and the device he used to restrain his excessive grief for the death of his beautiful queen. Finding him inconsolable, and that no reasoning he or others could urge made the least impression, he told him, at last, he would raise her from the dead. He took care, in the mean time, to require the King's promise, that whatsoever he wanted for the undertaking should be furnished him. Having received this assurance, he went about for some time, as if in search of the requisites for his astonishing purpose. Upon his return, he told Darius, that he had indeed obtained all things he sought for, with the exception of only a single article, which he, being

* Diog. Laert. *ibid.*
Epist.

† Cicer. de Fin. lib. 5.

‡ Julian's

ing Lord of all Asia, might perhaps be able to procure. It was no more than an inscription, for the royal tomb, of the names of three persons, attested to have *met with no occasion of grief*. The monarch was struck with the unexpected demand; and, awaked to recollection of the distresses incident to mortal men, confessed, that he despaired of finding the epitaph he desired. Then Democritus, giving scope to his derisive features, said to him, "Unreasonable as thou art, is it not shameful for thee to grieve and to mourn in the manner thou dost, as if no individual beside thyself had ever experienced such a calamity; when thou art obliged to acknowledge, that none can be named upon earth, who have not had their occasions of woe?"

This philosopher flourished chiefly in the time of the Peloponnesian war, which began in the 2d year of the 87th Olympiad, being, as he marked it in his book called the Little Diacosmos, forty years younger than Anaxagoras, whose birth is placed in the 1st year of the 70th Olympiad. This computation brings that of Democritus * to the commencement of the 80th of that aera. By all accounts he lived to the age of a hundred, or rather some years above it.

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9,

SECTION III.

Of the Sophists,—and of their associates of the Eleatic, or Eristic Sect.

IN tracing the progress of science, we have already touched upon the origin of a set of men, to whom the name of *Sophists* came to be particularly applied. The original term for the wise man, or sage, was undoubtedly, in the language of the Greeks, σοφός; but the derivative of it, σοφιστής, was early adopted as synonymous to it *. Hence Herodotus calls the seven wise men, indifferently, by both these names. The poets, also, as they were denominated *Sophists* by other authors, often bestowed † that epithet upon one another, as may be seen in various examples. It appears ‡, indeed, that the appellation was given to every eminent artist. It came, at length, to be more particularly fixed upon those, who, neither ranking properly with the philosophers, poets, or other known artists, professed excellence in rhetoric, or declamation; a faculty much admired, and, in time, converted to vast influence in the Grecian republics. The talent of those sophists consisted not solely in their oratory, or ready elocution, but extended to a supposed ability of sustaining, plausibly, any thesis proposed by them, either on philosophical or political subjects. Their whole study, therefore, was directed to the invention of turgid expression in set discourse, or subtleties in disputation, and to protract argument, without view or aim at any conclusion.

* In Clio, lib. 1.

† Pindar Isthm. Ode 5. Cratinus the poet called

Homer and Hesiod Sophists. Diog. Laert. in Prooem. p. 8.

‡ Aristot.

Ethic. lib. 6.—7. Cicer. de Orator. lib. 3.; et Acad. Quaest. lib. 2.

clusion. As their reputation increased, their assurance and vanity grew; so that their pretensions to universal knowledge and penetration, may be said to have been hardly equalled by those of the most renowned oracles *.

From this feature of the profession of the Sophists, we may conclude it to have been characteristical with them to make the most extravagant ostentation of their abilities; and that, being incapable to fulfil their declarations, they would, in order to secure admiration and gain, exert their oratorical and disputatious faculty, chiefly, to charm the ears, amuse the imaginations, or touch the passions, of their auditors. Accordingly, we are told †, it was a principle of science with them to explain and decide nothing; but to assert, and to controvert their assertions, or to cover over any question they treated with a magnificent parade of obscure words. In which practice, it was observed ‡, that they differed from all other professors of science, or art; since, in the great variety of them, it was generally known what they undertook to teach, and that such a measure of instruction might be obtained from them, as they were qualified to impart. But, of the Sophist, it could only be said, that he was one who *opened his mouth and declaimed*. It was not, therefore, without the justest grounds that they were, at length, accused of being, in respect of all civil or moral instruction, a set of selfish, trifling, or arrogant impostors, deserving public animadversion, instead of credit and encouragement in civil society. Yet, notwithstanding all these imputations, no class of men was so generally admired, and surrounded with such crowded audiences, as the Sophists. For this phenomenon in the Grecian states, two reasons may be assigned. A general one proceeded from the natural vivacity of the Greeks, which led them to a fondness for all exhibitions of an entertaining kind, whether of the forum or of the theatre; a passion which was cherished, more especially in some of their republics, to an excess unknown in other nations. A second reason was founded upon this propensity. From the prospect of the public approbation and recompense which followed every display of ingenuity,

* Lucian de Fugitivis.
ad initium.

† Ibid.

‡ Plato in Protagora.

ingenuity, or what appeared such to the multitude, several men, trained in the schools of philosophy, and proficient in the various branches of science, were induced to throw themselves into this field of reputation, and gather the laurels and the lucre it afforded. Of these associates to the Sophistical tribe, the most distinguished were disciples of the Eleatic sect, and conversant in Zeno's contentious logic. Such were Hippias of Elea, Protagoras of Abdera, Prodicus of Chios, and Gorgias of Leontium; persons whose natural genius, or acquired abilities, were sufficient to lend reputation to any liberal profession, whether laudable or not; and whose imitation of the presumptuous tone, and mercenary usages of the Sophists, operated so far in supporting the popular fame which attended them, that, until Socrates appeared, it received not the least check or diminution.

With the name of the first, two of Plato's dialogues * are inscribed; and, in each of them, Hippias exemplifies the character of a consummate Sophist; pretending to superior understanding in all sciences and arts, and boasting of the general applause which his declamations received, and of the vast pecuniary profits resulting from them. He is, therefore, first exposed to the irony of Socrates, and then subjected to the scrutinizing queries of that able detector of fallacious argument. It is Cicero's observation, however, that, although his arrogance, like that of his fraternity, was excessive, yet when, in addition † to his scientific attainments, he could declare, in the hearing of all Greece, at the Olympic Games, that the cloke he wore, the ring on his finger, and the sandals on his feet, were the work of his own hands, it might be allowed, that this tribe of orators was not destitute of intelligence in studies of importance, when their industry thus appeared in those of an inferior kind.

From a condition so abject as that of a porter, or bundler of wood, Protagoras came to ascend to the rank of a Sophist; and, in a favourable estimate of his abilities, to be reckoned one of the most acute disputants of the sect. He owed this change of his circumstances to Democritus's

* In Hippias majore, vel de Pulchro,
In minore, vel de mendacio.

† De Oratore, lib. 3. p. 192.

Protagoras's accidental observance of the mathematical accuracy with which his load of wood was disposed for easiest carriage. Being taken into the philosopher's service, his genius * was found equal to the prognostic of it; and it was not long before he was able to teach to others those lessons in mathematics he had learned from Democritus. But his mind was not so much addicted to the study of lines and figures, but that it carried him with more ardor to speculate upon the whole phenomena of nature; and that as much in the way of moral as of physical argumentation. Meanwhile, he played the part of the Sophist to the utmost of his abilities. He instituted disputes among the fraternity; and, instead of questions or topics, he gave them sophisms to discuss; and thus exercised their apparent dexterity in argument, by turning it upon verbal equivocations and ambiguities. Hence the dialectic of the schools came to be resolved entirely into that frivolous and unmeaning mode of disputation, which consists in quibbling, and altercations about words. He took care, however, to set a high value on his own prelections; the course of which was rated at a hundred *minae*; and for obtaining which, he often travelled, in company with Prodicus, from one city to another.

But it was not so much on account of these exhibitions that Protagoras incurred, more than others of his profession, the animadversions of Plato, Aristotle, and other philosophers. His doctrines, committed to writing, and published, gave sufficient occasion to them. Dissenting, in a great measure, from Democritus, and assuming the principle of Heraclitus, that nothing consisted with itself, or any other thing, but in a shape that was merely apparent, and of momentary continuance, and that all things flowed like a river, he connected the tenet of a material universe with this doctrine, which the Ephesian philosopher hesitated to do; and, upon these two positions, appeared to strike out a peculiar system of scepticism. "There are," said he, "but two assertions † to be made about every thing, the one being always contrary to the other;

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. Suidas in voce Protag.
 † Diogen. Laert. ibid. Sext. Empiric. Pyrrhoniæ. Hypotyposeon, lib. 1. cap. 32. p. 44. Plato in Thætet.

as that such a thing is, or is not. For either of them, in argument, there can be no critery of truth but human opinion; which, being particular in every man, must be to him the only test of what is true, and what is not true; so that every individual is to himself the measure of all things, as to their being or not being. That each man has his particular *phenomena* of things, may be concluded from the fluidity, and incessant motion of matter which admits *appositions*, but no subtractions, and varies the organs of sense in the different ages and constitutions of mankind. Any thing more than the senses, the soul is not. But matter holds, subjected in it, the reasons, or powers, of all apparent things, in such manner as to become to all, and every one, whatever these appearances represent. But men perceive things differently at different times, and according to their various habits. The sound, according to nature, perceive in matter those things which are capable of appearing to such persons; and the unsound, and whose constitution is unnaturally disposed, have, in like manner, their suitable perceptions. And the same is to be said of the differences occasioned by sleeping or waking, and all the changeful affections incident to the human frame."

No piece of false or sophistical reasoning seems more calculated for the support of scepticism than this; and yet Sextus Empiricus* will not allow it to be fabricated in the proper Pyrrhonian strain. Its author, says he, dogmatizes, by pronouncing matter to be in constant and perpetual fluxion, and that in it were subjected the reasons of all apparent things. These are uncertainties, to which no just assent can be given; and the more so, he might have added, that no special proof was afforded either for the one or the other position, but both are thrown together, to frame an hypothesis, which, after all, appears inconsistent with itself. For, if all matter be in a more fluid condition than water, or air, or fire, or in one equal to any of them, it cannot be conceived to become either agent or patient, in any thing relative to human perceptions, but to evade all such combinations as they require. In vain is this modification said to proceed from the senses, which are passive to impressions, and cannot be active in fabricating them but according to a modus, or a certain state of their organizations. But, if the soul, as must be supposed, be the source of the perceptive faculty, it must be a principle

* Pyrrhon. Hypotyp. cap. 32.

principle superior to the senses, since, in the act of perception alone, more is performed by it than any of them, or all of them taken together, can be conceived to accomplish. Nor yet is perception and opinion the same, nor the one always consequent to the other. We perceive often without reflection, or forming any opinion with respect to the object or sensation: And, when an opinion is conceived, it is not held to be the *criterie* of truth, or that idea of the object which the mind, on farther reflection, or on a more accurate survey of it, may entertain. In most cases, excepting the animal sensations of pain or pleasure, the act of judgment is withheld, and the mind remains in suspense, and, as it were, in expectation of what it must, subsequently, discover to help its decision. Man, therefore, in the possession of his reason, admits neither his perceptions, nor his first conceived opinion, to be to him a final judgment of truth. He is known, on the contrary, to have instincts, even in infancy, for trying the veracity of the former; and to assume the latter, upon the footing that it may be varied, or altogether rejected, upon mature deliberation, or clearer evidence. This variation of his opinions is, therefore, falsely imputed to the changeable frame of his corporeal organs. It is generally a voluntary act, of which he is conscious; and he exercises it early, as if apprised of its necessity, in a state where acquisitions of knowledge are found, by experience, to be gradual, and the mind to be led to them by slow, but yet progressive steps. But sentiment or opinion, confirmed by the mind's repeated judgments of it, so far from being easily varied, yields not, but to the strongest conviction, of its being erroneous; and, frequently, the persistence of the mind, in its adopted ideas, is such, as to reject all evidence in contradiction to them. They are adhered to in the decline of the bodily constitution, and in the infirmity and fluctuation of the organs of sense; which, therefore, cannot be the foundation of these opinions. To alledge that there must be a disagreement of men's sentiments and opinions, because of some imagined particularities in their conceptions of objects, is of no more consequence than to assert, that because, in vision, the same angles of incidence, from the rays of light, are not subtended by the eyes of all men, and that differences do take place; there-

fore, there must be a general diffension among them, as to the common appearance of visible objects; or, because the conceptions of a perfect circle, or of a perfect square, if it can be formed, may not be precisely the same in all judicious minds, that, therefore, the properties of these different mathematical figures cannot be so distinctly investigated, or so justly ascertained, as not to leave room for differences of opinion, and various judgments, with respect to them. This much may be said in confutation of Protagoras's sceptical hypothesis, and of his particular assertion, that whatever a man thinks is to him the measure of its certainty, or the measure of truth and real being. The fallacy of the converse proposition, that what any man does not think, or which has no appearance of being to him, is not true, and has no real being, we shall find exposed, with logical exactness, in the account of the Platonic philosophy.

That one who could pretend to maintain, were it only in the way of argument, that the truth of things, and their being, or not being, depended upon his or another man's perceptions of them, and, consequently, that they might be realized, or annihilated, according to the subsistence, or obliteration, of these perceptions; that such a frantic sophist should stick at no position whatsoever, need not be surprising. It may, therefore, be accounted only such a scoffing trespass upon the sentiments common to mankind, as might be expected from Protagoras, when he introduced one of his books with the sentence *, "Whether the gods are, or are not, or what they are, I cannot say; as various difficulties occur in the question, for the discussion of which human life is short." The reading of this gave such public offence in Athens, that a decree passed for his banishment, under pain of death, and the burning of all the copies of his book that could be found. He quitted in haste the Athenian territories, and did not long survive his expulsion. But, had he been called upon to plead, and *shew cause* why, according to his philosophy, this sentence should not pass, when the Athenian judges had their imaginations impressed with this *criterie* of his book, it is

* Sextus Empiric. adversus cont. Mathem. lib. 3. p. 319. Cicer. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1. p. 204. Diogen. Laert. ibid.

is plain that Protagoras could have had no defensive reply; or, if he had opposed his particular criterie to theirs, he must have confessed, that, by his measure of truth, a thing might be true and false at the same time.

Prodicus, of the isle of Ceos, was another Sophist of great reputation; and being himself Protagoras's disciple, is said to have had Socrates, Euripides, Isocrates, and Theramenes, for his hearers *. In Plato's dialogue of the Sophists, Socrates expresses a desire to see and hear him, in preference to all the rest of the convention, from the idea he had conceived of his knowledge, and his eminent personal virtues. The natural coarseness of his voice †, which was increased by his frequent vociferations in public, did not abate the admiration of his eloquence. Although a public envoy from his country to Athens, he betook himself to teaching rhetoric in that city; a proof of the credit in which the profession of oratory was held, notwithstanding the tarnishing it received from the Sophists. He appears to have supported the character of a strict moralist in his declamations and literary works, as well as of an able rhetorician; of which his fable of *the Judgment of Hercules* may be reckoned a just and elegant testimony. He did not, however, decline taking the full profits of his profession. His declamations were studied and prepared; and had different prices set upon them. That of *fifty drachmas* was famous in the schools. Extemporary harangues he is not reckoned to have tried. To exhibit in this manner, and to display, more signally than all his contemporaries, the united talents of the Sophist and the Rhetorician, was reserved for Gorgias of Leontium, in Sicily, and reputed originally the disciple of Empedocles.

He was unquestionably a most singular and extraordinary genius, in respect of his oratorial qualifications ‡. Cicero's estimate of them is sufficiently encomiastic, but not equal to the audacity of the man, who professed to reply immediately to any question that could be proposed to

* In Protagora, ad initium.
lib. 1. p. 488. Suidas in voce.
et de Rhetorica.

† Philostratus in *Vitis Sophist.* edit. fol.
‡ Ibid. de Orat. lib. 3. Plato in *Gorgia*

to him, upon any subject, and to give it the proper dialectic discussion; and actually challenged the whole Olympic assembly to find one able to contend with him, either in dissertation or in dispute. It was no wonder that every one might be afraid to enter the lists with an antagonist who offered to maintain these three theses: "1st, That there was nothing, or no being. 2dly, If there was being, man could not be comprehended in it. 3dly, If he was comprehended, it could not be expressed." What prostitution of common reason, and what frantic oratory, Gorgias must have adopted in supporting such propositions, is hardly to be imagined. We cannot, indeed, deny, without contradicting the best judges of antiquity, that, upon proper subjects, he discovered amazing powers not only of fluent and copious, but persuasive elocution *. He is allowed to have improved, and introduced refinements, in the rhetorical art, comparable to those which are ascribed to Æschyles, in Tragedy. These are said to have consisted principally in the nice arrangements of his words and sentences, which gave them an agreeable and harmonious cadence, and in contrasting frequently the figures and metaphors he used. His orations were, therefore, in the highest celebrity over all Greece, and in the neighbouring nations. In the solemnities of the Pythian, and Olympic games, he pronounced panegyrics upon eminent men, especially on those who fell in battle, and, by their valour, or conduct, had merited the honours of a public sepulchre. In these pieces, the polish he could give to his studied compositions was conspicuous. From the demand for such eulogies, and his other exhibitions, he acquired much wealth; and yet a superior share of fame and influence in the Grecian states, and more particularly at Athens. There, in proportion to the greater admiration in which all liberal and entertaining arts and endowments were held by the citizens, his reputation rose, and the benefit of it was extended to all the tribe of Sophists and Rhetoricians. By the propensity of the youth to become their followers, it seemed, in a city the resort of the wise and the learned, and in a commonwealth where so much depended on their

* Philostrat. *ibid.* p. 487. Cicero, *ibid.*

their proper education, that the management of it was likely to fall entirely into the hands of a class of men who converted all science into perplexed argument, and taught versatility in the principles of reason, and in the doctrines of morality. Into this unpromising scene, it was the lot of Socrates to be introduced. In what respect the character he supported, and the philosophy he taught, were distinguishable from all others who preceded him in the Ionian, or Athenian school, comes now to be brought into view.

P A R T

THE HISTORY OF THE

their proper education, and the management of the property to which they were entitled. The first of these was the education of the children, and the second was the management of the property. The third was the education of the children, and the fourth was the management of the property. The fifth was the education of the children, and the sixth was the management of the property. The seventh was the education of the children, and the eighth was the management of the property. The ninth was the education of the children, and the tenth was the management of the property. The eleventh was the education of the children, and the twelfth was the management of the property. The thirteenth was the education of the children, and the fourteenth was the management of the property. The fifteenth was the education of the children, and the sixteenth was the management of the property. The seventeenth was the education of the children, and the eighteenth was the management of the property. 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PART IV.

SECTION I.

Of Socrates;—his Character, and Accomplishments, as a Philosopher;—his Manner of Reasoning.—Sketches of his Philosophy, and Moral Doctrines.

THE father of Socrates was by trade a sculptor, or cutter of marble into figures, called Sophroniscus. His mother, whose name was Phaenareta *, could reckon her pedigree from an Athenian family of rank; but her indigence, not much relieved by her husband's circumstances, made her engage in the profession of midwifery. She is described in Plato's Thætetus, as remarkable for the austerity of her countenance, joined with a boldness of feature. Her son's physiognomy, in manhood, had yet more singularity. His aspect was morose, his look rather dejected, and heavy, his nose flat, and his head bald; while his eyes were small and prominent. The painters and statuaries could hardly err in taking the uncommon lineaments of his countenance, or his bust; but those who first beheld him, and formed any judgment of his dispositions from his aspect, were apt to be much mistaken †. He is said to have followed for some time his father's occupation; and to have carved the figures of the Graces, in robes, which stood in the *Acropolis*, or Citadel of Athens. From the penury of his parents ‡, some

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 2.

† Pausanias Boeoticis, lib. 9. p. 596.

‡ Plato in Menone, sub Fin. Cicero in Paradoxis.

writers would conclude, with Porphyry, that he had no literary education; a conjecture which is contradicted by the best authorities; and which appears, from his extensive knowledge in all the subjects of philosophy, to be repugnant to truth. In that aera of the Grecian literature, masters in the different sciences and arts so much abounded, that, without having recourse to the mercenary Sophists, it was not difficult for any free born citizen of Athens, who had genius, to obtain, upon easy terms, a learned education. Accordingly, we are told that Socrates began his philosophical studies under Anaxagoras; and, upon his exile, became the favourite disciple of Archelaus *, who got the name of the Physical Philosopher, as being the first in Athens who professed that branch of science †. The names, also, of several instructors he had in particular arts, and in the theorems of geometry and mathematics, are transmitted; of which Damon, banished Athens for his excellence in music, and Connus of the same profession, together with Evenus the poet, and Theodorus the geometrician, are in celebrity. Of all the Sophists, he only attended Prodicus: What instruction he received from the famous *Diotima* will be afterwards mentioned. He was born, according to the exactest computation, in the fourth year of the 77th Olympiad, and in the 467th before the Christian aera.

Socrates early discovered a natural faculty of expressing his conceptions; and he possessed a species of eloquence untaught by the Rhetoricians, and peculiar to himself. It differed from the declamation of the orator, as it affected no figures of speech, or studied ornaments, and likewise from the too concise and sententious style, which was dry, and often obscure. It had an excellence superior to both these; where instruction was required, and persuasion to be effectuated, by an address to the human mind, and not to the passions. It was, indeed, best adapted to *colloquial* reasoning, or that carried on by dialogue; a method of teaching philosophy, which Socrates, upon several accounts, preferred both to the declamatory manner, and to the simple didactic. The dialogue

* Diog. Laert. lib. 2. Cicero Tuscul. Quaest. lib. 5. † Maximus Tyrius, Differt. 22. p. 226. Plutarch. in Pericle, Suidas, in voce Socrat. Cicer. in Epist. lib. 9. p. 104.

logue admitted not easily the pompous or flowery strain, into which the one was apt to run; and, by proper management, it could conceal, or avoid altogether, the appearance of dictating, which was disagreeable in the other. But, if Socrates had excelled in declamation, and chose to captivate his hearers by rhetorical harrangues, there was a just and forcible objection to his following this course. The reputation in which the Sophists and Orators were held, was a reason sufficient for his departing, as far as he could, from their manner of arguing and persuading, and adopting one of his own, in contrast to their vanity and ostentation. As he wished more to prove a useful instructor in the science he professed, than to be deemed a shining orator, or even a profound theorist in philosophy, he took care that his method of teaching should correspond with this laudable aim.

Instead, therefore, of boasting, like the Sophist, that he was a master in every science, he gave it out, *that he was only so far intelligent, as to understand that he knew nothing* *. When every principle of reason was brought into controversy, and fallacious dexterity in argument passed for superiority in reason, Socrates saw it to be necessary and expedient to emit no assertions of his own, but to wait for, or to prompt, those of others, and to make them the ground of his disquisitions. This cautious manner was of more consequence than the greatest acuteness in disputation. By the use of it some incitement could always be given to an antagonist, however wary, either to assert, or to grant, something which could be turned against him with propriety and force. Beside being the properest and best weapon that could be employed against the sceptical reasoner, Socrates proved its advantage †, in rendering the youth, from their concessions, apparently their own instructors. The conclusion of his dialogical reasoning was often not a direct or positive confutation of what was asserted or denied by his opponents, but a finely conducted proof of its absurdity. When the effrontery of the hardened Sophist, or the dissipated ideas of the libertine, or the dogmatism of the school bred philosopher, diminished the influence of this conviction, it

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* Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 1. p. 5.
Officiis, lib. 1. p. 365.

† Ibid. lib. 4. p. 14.; et in

was apparent that a vein of irony had accompanied the discussion of the argument on Socrates's part, which, if it did not enforce what he said, tended to guard it against any affected scorn, or to turn into ridicule the arrogated wisdom of a supercilious adversary. His art in joining irony with his serious discourse, in the manner of a skilful satyrift, was so remarkable, that some graver philosophers called him the *Attic jester*; and Aristophanes *, and the other comic poets, who were adverse to him, and probably bore not well his excellence in their talent, accused him of sporting with reason, and setting it at variance with itself. It was this faculty, however, which enabled him more easily to baffle the Sophists; and, united with his other abilities, had the effect of engaging the Athenian youth to seek his company, and relish the pleasantry of his conversation.

Whatever instructions in *physics* Socrates obtained under Archelaus, he is known soon to have relinquished that study; and, following the natural bent of his genius, to have turned his principal attention to that of *morals* †. Of this science, in the school of Athens, he became the eminent father, and founder; and, in respect of the general neglect of it by the Ionian philosophers, he is said to have been the first who recalled philosophy from fanciful theories about the production of the world, and the constitution of the heavenly bodies, to the more suitable and interesting contemplation of human nature itself, and the *study of man*, as having an end in life most worthy to be regarded, and which, by proper discipline, he could attain. "Such researches," said he ‡, "as transcend the human faculties, or which nature has hid in obscurity, are not *relative*, or only in a secondary way, to the human kind." When we reflect upon the state of philosophy, as, previous to his appearance, it has been represented, and consider that the Pythagorean system, either in its theological or moral part, was hardly known to any but those of that sect, and that it required a discipline that was accounted foreign, and disgusting to the Grecian taste; it must be apparent what a defect there was, in all the schools, in point of sufficient moral instruction,

* Aristophan. in Nubibus.
Cicer. Acad. Quaest. ibid.

† Aristot. Metaph. lib. 1. cap. 6. p. 649.
‡ Sextus Empiric. lib. 7. p. 139.

tion, either as to theory or practice. If we add to this the particular situation of the Athenian state at this juncture, we may be convinced, that, beside the natural and just preference to be given to the moral science, Socrates was urged, by special motives, to cultivate and improve, more than all other studies, the knowledge of its principles.

In the preceding ages, the doctrine delivered by the greatest and best poets was not of the soundest kind. It displayed the pernicious effects of the indulged, and violent passions; while, at the same time, it assigned, in a certain degree, the character of merit and worth to persons acting under their undue influence. It was generally to be learned, not by positive precept, but by inference. It was often enveloped in allegories, and obscure fictions, and grossly contaminated by impure fables about the gods. Among the wise men, or first philosophers of Greece, it was comprehended in short sentences, unconnected, and elucidated by no deduction of reason, and too general in their import to be rules for the particular practice of duty. When the Sophists drew all maxims into dispute, and spread the taste of wrangling upon every topic, the moral or political apothegms would be treated with contempt, or form only a feeble barrier against their captious logic, or verbose declamation. In consequence of the contagion they had diffused, it appeared, in Socrates's time, that a total revolt from the principles and practice of morals was about to ensue among the citizens of Athens. From the high prosperity of the republic before the Peloponnesian war, undertaken from vanity, and injudiciously conducted, the way to this general depravation of manners had been paved *. In its unfortunate issue, joined with the dreadful calamity of the plague, which lasted three years, and carried off 4500 citizens, beside numbers of others, the Athenians were not sufficiently taught to restrain their ambition, or to revert to sobriety of manners. After Pericles's death, the public disorders increased, to that height, that both the ties, and the sense, of justice and equity seemed, from the prevalence of faction, and the ferocity engendered by a long war, to be nearly obliterated †. It is known, that, in a democratical government,

* Thucydides, lib. 3. parag. 14.
cap. 1. et 3. 8vo edit. pag. 250.

† Xenophon. Memorab. lib. 4.

government, more than in any other, morality and virtue are the great stays of the state; and that, unless such of the youth, as, from their station, are likely to rise to authority, be trained up in virtuous principles, corruption will prevail, and soon infect all orders of the community. Animated with the zeal of a patriot, and possessed of the sentiments of a philosopher, who chose *morals* for his part of science, Socrates thought it his duty to oppose, to the utmost of his ability, the growing evil of vice and depravity in the state; and, by engaging the youth of rank to come under his tuition, to impress their docile minds with a detestation of it.

To pretend to this office, he had no other title, or recommendation, but what his character as a man and a citizen, and his name as a philosopher, afforded him. He was seen to live in the most frugal and abstemious manner, and to be exemplary in temperance, and in the moderation of all his appetites and passions. He had rescued Alcibiades, upon his first service in the field *, from being stripped of his armour by the enemy; and prevailed, by his arguments, to have the prize of valour, due to himself, to be adjudged to the youthful soldier. In watching, and military hardships, he was observed to surpass the common soldiers; and, when Xenophon was thrown from his horse †, and incapable of being remounted, he had the vigour to carry him several furlongs upon his shoulders, until he was out of danger of being overtaken by the victorious enemy. In that defeat of the Athenians, his intrepidity, in often halting, and taking a calm circumspection of every advantage that could be taken in the retreat, was no less remarkable. To distinguish, to the Athenians, his profession of philosophy from that of the Sophists, or Orators, he instituted no regular school, or auditory, in his house, or any particular place. He delivered no course of studied lectures from his chair; and it is rather in ridicule, that Aristophanes mentions, that he had his *phrontisterion*, or high desk, surrounded with benches. He saw this declamatory manner of instruction every day abused; and, even where virtue itself was the subject, he neither much studied nor admired it.

* Plutarch. in Alcibiade.
in Convivio.

† Diogen. Laert. in Xenophonte. Plato.

it. General principles of morals, however well connected, he knew often take but a slight hold of the human mind; and, although the greatest theorist of his age in ethical doctrine, his aim and ambition was to be the practical teacher of virtue. This, he thought, could be best accomplished by conversing familiarly with his pupils, and modifying his lessons in such a way as suited with their different capacities, and the proper regulation of their natural tempers.

To few or none were the elements of any particular science taught by him *; and, where some individuals who attended him required such instruction, they were directed by him to the proper masters. His discourses, which were of a general kind, respecting the principles upon which theology, morals, politicks, and oeconomics, proceeded, he made special, and particular, when appearances in the manners, or character, of any of his hearers rendered it necessary. They were chiefly calculated for those, whose future department might create much good or ill to the commonwealth, or to their families. To meet with such †, he was almost constantly abroad, during the mornings and evenings, in the public walks, or, with more select parties of his friends, on the banks of the Ilissus; and, at other times, in the Gymnasia, or in the Forum of the city. In this manner, says Plutarch, he made every place to which he resorted a school of virtue. In the midst of all this assiduity to communicate useful instruction, he took no money, not even from those who attended him at home, for daily improvement; and he received, with exceptions, and much reserve, the presents that were sent him by the most opulent.

That he possessed singular invention, and originality in argument, together with the most energetic and persuasive elocution, not the least doubt can be entertained. To the superficial, and those who looked for the outward address of the orator, and could only be entertained with rhetorical flourishes, his personal appearance, and his manner of opening the subjects of his discourse, seemed homely and upolished ‡. But his constant attendants, who knew what they were to hear, were also pleased

* Xenophon. Memorabilia, lib. 4. cap. 7. 8vo edit. pag. 319.
lib. 1. cap. 1.

† Plato in Convivio.

‡ Ibid.

pleased with the simplicity of his manner. They compared it to the figures of Silenus, and the Satyres, which were often grouped with those of other divinities, and carried about in the streets. Their rustic forms were forbidding to the eyes of the beholders; but, as soon as the sweet music of their pipes and flutes was heard, all the exterior beauty of the other deities was disregarded. How justly this commendation might be given to Socrates's discourses, and what a charm they had above the most decorated orations of the Sophists, can only be understood by those * who are conversant in the representations of them by Plato and Xenophon, without mentioning some imitations of them by Æschines, and other Socratics. There is no form into which the reasoning in these dialogues can be cast, by any modern writer, which can shew them in a light, in any degree, comparable to the original one, in which his two eminent disciples, masters of the true taste of antiquity in the dialogue, have happily placed them. There is, however, much dissimilarity in the style of these authors, and in the extent and amplification of the subjects treated, the greatest disproportion between them. The distinct merit each of them had in their literary compositions may afterwards be observed. Here the point to be considered is, which of them may be reckoned to have most justly represented the original, or given the truest copy of their master's philosophy.

It appears evident, that, of Socrates's own writing, nothing remained after his death, but a hymn to Apollo, and a fable in the manner of Æsop †, which he composed when in prison ‡. The story of a gift made by him, or by his wife Xantippe, of some dialogues he had written, to Æschines, is too vaguely related to deserve credit. His more studious disciples, such as Cebes, Æschines, Plato, and Xenophon, were careful to take notes of his set discourses, and occasional conversations. The latter, according to Diogenes Laertius §, first began publishing the commentaries he made of these discourses, under the title of *Commentaries*;
or

* Socraticae poterant ostendere chartae. Hor.

† Cicero de Oratore, lib. 3.

‡ Diogenes in Æschine, lib. 2. p. 116.

§ In Xenophont. lib. 2. p. 109.

or pieces which had, from their simpler form, the character of authenticity and exactness, but not the ornaments, which, from study and imagination, they might receive. In this shape, his *Memorabilia* of Socrates may well be allowed to have been produced; since every approach to decoration is avoided, and not the least excursion is made from the plain tract of the narrative that is given. Plato, it is obvious, and generally acknowledged, assumes the liberty of delivering, either as espoused, or favoured by Socrates, several philosophical tenets, and theories, some of which, it is highly probable, were never known to him; and which he himself confesses were borrowed from foreign schools. Dialogues there are, which have been, and with justice may be, accounted *Socratic*, or much more consonant than others to the doctrines of his master. When in these, or others, references are made to facts, or incidents, in Socrates's deportment, or to conversations that must have been publicly known, there can be no hesitation about the credit due to them; and, where an evident deficiency appears in Xenophon's narrative, or only a cursory sketch of the dialogical argument is found, what ancient authors have generally received, as the proper supplement by Plato, must be admitted. But, as our proper object is to give the justest, and not the most adorned account of Socrates's reasoning on theological and moral subjects, the examples will be taken, chiefly, from the author against whom the least exception lies, and who is known to have preferred simplicity and truth to the splendid colouring of diffuse and redundant eloquence.

It is a proof sufficient of itself, if there were no other, of the attractions of Socrates's conversation, that he was able, in a short time, to check the admiration in which the Sophists were generally held, and to detach from attending their declamations, a number of the most eminent youth. Such, beside Plato, Xenophon, and others, addicted of themselves to the study of philosophy, were Crito, Charmidas, Theramenes, Critias, Theages, Euthydemus, Euthyphron, and, to mention one in room of all the rest, Alcibiades, equally famous for his signal endowments, and his various misdemeanours. He whose early vanity *

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* Plutarch, in Alcibiade.

was flattered by the Athenians, and who also knew how to flatter them into a compliance with whatever he wished to do, either in a public or private capacity, thought it a merit to be the favourite of Socrates. In fear of reprehension from none, he stood in awe of his reproof, and was observed, in consequence of it, not only to cease from his irregularities for a time, but to give symptoms of his shame of them, and of his sensibility to virtue, in a degree which few believed could take place in his breast. When it was apparent, that the aim of Socrates's tuition was not so much to entertain them with philosophical theories, as to improve them in useful knowledge, and moral deportment, conferences with him, while the delight of some, became the aversion of others. Several, by fits, sought after, and fled from his conversation. When this last circumstance happened to any distinguished genius among them, such as Alcibiades, the interest which Socrates had in the giddy apostate was not quickly, or easily resigned by him. He was solicitous to reclaim him; and, as was usual among the Greeks, declared himself the lover of such a youth, whose talents were either in danger of being lost, or proving fatal to his country. In this strain, according to Plato, he imitated the passion of a jealous lover; appearing to be in distress, until he could regain the direction of his fugitive pupil.

That this part might be acted with all the purity of a philosophic mind, by such a person as Socrates*, we need not quote, for argument, any part of Plato's dialogues upon the refinement of love, nor the studied dissertations of Maximus Tyrius upon the subject. We shall only produce Xenophon's testimony in proof of the moral lessons he read, and of the example he afforded of unstained manners, and strict virtue, to those of every age and condition, conversant with him. "It is wonderful," says that author, "how any could be persuaded that he corrupted the youth, so as to render them either voluptuous, or immodest, or insolent, or ambitious; who, beside the sentiments which he entertained of the gods, which led directly to probity and virtue, was himself, personally, the most abstemious and continent of all men; and whose habits of enduring inconveniencies, and restraints were so confirmed, that he underwent

* Plato in Convivio, Max. Tyr. Diff. 8. 9. 10.

derwent any labour or hardship, equally in the summer's heat and in the winter's cold. Nay, to all who knew how he lived with contentment and chearfulness, in apparent penury, it was shown to what degree their sensual appetites might be controuled; so that in minds studious of virtue, the agreeable hope might be entertained, that, by due vigilance over themselves, and manly resolution, they might become, like him, admirable proficient in the exercise of it *." Such improvement, it was well known, many of his attendants received, either by the culture of their good dispositions, or the correction of their vices. Phaeton †, born of a noble family, but, in the disaster of his country, reduced to beggary, he rescued from abominable prostitution. Æschines he took under his care, from no other recommendation but the appearances of a natural genius, and of a patient temper, in great poverty. Among the families of eminent condition, there were few which had not, occasionally, some obligation to him, on account of the advice he gave, or the interposition he used, for regulating the intractable tempers, or restraining the licentious or undutiful behaviour of their sons. Yet the stern brow of the reproving preceptor he seldom, or almost never assumed, even with those under his particular charge. He counted much upon the modesty of nature, and the sense of shame in youth, as being the best guards of their manners, and which it was improper and unsafe to impair by harsh, and repeated animadversion. He looked for the blush in the youthful countenance; and, where it did not appear, or soon vanished, he was apt to reject, or to dismiss such pupils, as giving little prospect of their moral improvement under him. When Critias appeared shameless ‡, and unmoved, with the private, and calm rebuke he gave him, on account of his disgraceful passion, he took occasion, in company where the delinquent was present, to animadvert upon it. The comparison he made of his brutal practice was just, but severe. Critias felt the sting of the simile, and the affront, but not the virtuous shame. He withdrew in anger from the moralist; and ever after showed himself his irreconcilable enemy.

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* Memorab. lib. 1. cap. 2.
Æsch.

† Memorab. ibid.

‡ Diogen. Laert. lib. 2. in Phaet. et in

If we next inquire, upon what theory of the moral science he proceeded, or whether he traced the principles and obligations of virtue from the deductions of abstract reason, or internal sentiments found in the human breast, or from the evidences of a constitution of things here below, supported upon, and relative to the system of an intellectual and moral world; the general answer is, that he connected his principles of morals with rational ones in theology, and considered both the theory and practice of virtue as best established by this connection. At the same time, as he delivered no special system of theology, but contented himself with holding forth the justest and best conceptions he could form of a *deity*, and other divine beings; he resolved his theory of morals into the contemplation of man, as an individual, as a father of a family, and as a member of a commonwealth, or more enlarged community. The propriety of this digestion of his moral scheme will be subsequently explained. According to the accounts given of his theological reasoning by Xenophon, Plato, Diogenes Laertius, and Plutarch, he entertained a contemptible opinion of those philosophers, who, if indeed they were in earnest, pretended to explain the whole phenomena of nature upon physical principles, or the action of the particles of matter upon one another, without the concurrence of a wise and designing mind. "Have ever these expounders," said he, "of what is inexplicable to us, been found to agree in any one hypothesis? or, rather, is not the repugnance and contrariety of their * suppositions constantly manifested, while some assert that all things are one, and others hold an infinite diversity of them? With one party the universe is in eternal motion; and, with another, it has no mobility. All things are alternately generated, and corrupted, say some: There is no such principle as the one or the other, say their opponents. But," added he, "after so bold an attempt to unfold the most intricate process of nature, it might be expected of such philosophers to tell us, not only what water is, and what air, and fire, and how matter is combined in these, or other elementary substances, but to be able also, from their clear insight into the mechanism of these bodies, to produce them ready made, and fitted up
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* Memorab. lib. 1. cap. 2. p. 9.

for the occasions of mankind. But of this, as yet, they give us no hopes."

Upon reading Anaxagoras's book of physical philosophy, he expressed much surprise to find so few references made in it to his distinguishing tenet of the *νοῦς*, or intelligent mind, discovered in the wise and harmonious disposition of things. "To me," said Socrates *, "he appears to philosophise much in the same manner as a man would do, who, after allowing that I was an intelligent being, and capable of acting upon rational motives, should yet take upon him to account for any particular motions made, or positions taken by me, only from the mobility of my body, and the flexible make of my limbs and joints; and so should conclude, that, without any will of my own, or command of others interposed, I must necessarily be found at this very hour in prison, as I am, and sitting in my present posture. These physiologists, added he, do nothing more than grope in the dark for causes, under the name of physical ones, which are neither in themselves perspicuous, nor adequate to their acknowledged effects. Thus, while they allow the earth to be upheld, in the firmest manner possible, they, notwithstanding, decline confessing it to be so from a divine power; instead of which, they rear up some *Atlas* of their own invention, which they would represent as mightier, wiser, and more enduring, than that original cause; which, having at first made the best arrangement of the world, maintains it in that condition."

You admit, said he, to Aristodemus, (who was sceptical in his opinions about a deity presiding over the world), that there are those among men, who, on account of their excellence in the more ingenious arts, are justly admired for their knowledge and skill †. Such you reckon Homer in epic poetry, Melanippides in dithyrambics, Sophocles in tragedy, Polycletus in statuary work, and Zeuxis in painting. Do you not likewise account those more worthy of admiration, who produce animals, intelligent and active, than such as present only pictures and figures of them, which, however just, are void of mind and motion? "Yes, surely," replied Aristodemus, "provided the former be not fortuitous

* Plato in *Phaedone*, vel de *Anima*.
et sequent.

† *Memorab. ibid. cap. 4. p. 54.*

tuitous productions, but the effects of contrivance and design." But what do you understand by a designed work; and how is it to be distinguished from a casual one? Is it to be conceived or defined any other way, but that it is the accomplishment of some useful end, by fit means, in opposition to that which no body can imagine for what purpose, or from what motive, it was produced? It is allowed to be the proper distinction. "You must then grant *," said Socrates, "that the *first makers* of men furnished them with the several organs of sense for the purposes of perception; with eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, and palates for tasting, which are so indispensibly requisite to life, and its preservation. Every part, indeed, of the human frame is marked with like signatures of provident care and skilful design; and which, if but slightly attended to, can never be taken for the effect of chance, or for any thing less than the operation of a wise artist, who, loving his creatures, was the cherisher of their lives. In their procreation, in the fond affection which prompts the parents to rear them in infancy, in their innate desire of life, and in their dread of losing it, corresponding evidences are afforded, that their being, with the continuation of it, was intended, and that for these ends all suitable provisions were ordained.

"Again, you are conscious, Aristodemus, that there is within you a principle of intelligence, which I, and all other men, also experience. Can you suppose, then, that it exists no where but in you, and others of the human kind; when, in regard to your body, it is apparent, that the materials of its composition are borrowed portions of earth, water, and other elements, the great masses of which are found in the world? If mind have no original, or existence, but with us, by what means, or way, do we men come to be possessed of it? Or, are we to conclude, upon the whole system of things we behold, immense in magnitude, and infinite in number, as they are, and yet connected together, that they have had no other arrangement, excepting what blind hazard may have afforded them?" "To this opinion," replied Aristodemus, "I am led, because I have not the sight of the disposers of these things in the universe, after the manner I have access to behold human agency." "No more,"

* In the account of the Platonic philosophy, we shall find who were held to be the *first makers* of men.

more," answered Socrates, "is your principle of intelligence, or your soul, visible to you, which yet hath a dominion over your body; and so, according to your reasoning, and because you do not see it, you may, if you please, as well infer, that all your motions and actions are the result of chance, and not of judgment or understanding."

Thus it appears, that Socrates argued in a distinct and just manner, for the being and agency of a first cause in the universe, intelligent and good, and of a nature as different from material, and sensible substance, as the human mind, conscious of its existence, and of its internal powers of action, is, on reflection, distinguishable from the body *. This original author of other beings, he called *God*, or deity †; and the supreme, and all governing *wisdom* ‡. To mark his exalted perfections above other inferior, and ministerial divinities, he is announced to be that *being* who framed the world, and contains it; and who, ever performing the greatest works, is plainly to be discovered in them, but, otherwise, is invisible to men.

"What you advance with respect to the gods," said Aristodemus, might be granted, if there was sufficient proof that they regarded the affairs of mankind." "Whatever," replied Socrates, "is admirable in the fabric of human bodies, and distinguishes them from other animals, testifies the divine attention and care of men. But, without enumerating those specialities in their outward form, which appear to be both honourable and advantageous to them, let it be only considered what, and how much, you must allow the gods have bestowed upon the human kind, in that their greatest and best gift, the rational soul, or mind. It is this that gives them the faculty, which no other animals possess, of discovering, in the survey of the no less magnificent, than beautiful, constitution of the world, that there are existing such divine beings, the authors or promoters of this wonderful oeconomy. What tribe of creatures, beside the human, is led to worship them? With respect to the provident sagacity in which some of them appear to excel others, how far is its utmost extent surpassed by that of man; whether it be in guarding against want, or fencing against the extremes of cold, or heat,

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* Memorab. ibid. lib. 4. p. 287.

† Ibid. lib. 1. p. 6.

‡ Ibid. lib. 4. cap. 3. p. 285.

or in finding remedies for diseases, or in the application of strength? Add to this, all the improvements which memory, joined with reason, enables him to make of whatever he sees, hears, or learns from others. When this is taken into the account, may it not be truly said, that it is given to men to live among other animals with the comparative pre-eminence and dignity of gods? Such superior advantage they have in all natural endowments, both of body and mind. Is there not, therefore, reason to conclude, that the regard of the gods is abundantly extended to us? Or, what addition do you imagine should be made, to complete its sufficiency?"

"I would have them," replied Aristodemus, "to send us counsellors of our resolutions and enterprises, that we may understand which of them ought to be executed, and which forborn. "That they do this," said Socrates, "in interesting matters, but which lie beyond the reach of human judgment, the divinations, and oracular responses, to which the Athenians, and other nations, have recourse, afford a presumption, and indeed an assurance. For, why should the gods, who have impressed upon human minds the persuasion that such admonitions are to be expected about future good or ill, that cannot otherwise be known, be supposed deficient in performing that service which they can easily do? or, why should it be thought that mankind have been constantly deceived upon this point, without ever finding out their error? It is a fact, however, vouched from history, that the nations which have flourished most in power and wealth, have also been remarkable for piety, and reverence of the gods; and that the wisest ages have been the most observant of their worship, and the significations of their will." "Deity," said Aristodemus, "so far as discoverable to men, I do not disregard; but think it to be much exalted above the need, or requisition, of my worship." "Nay," replied Socrates, "the more exalted in power and dignity that being is who deigns to take care of you, the greater must your obligation be to venerate and adore him."

It is Xenophon's just reflection upon Socrates's * representation of the *deity*, as all wise, present every where, and an inspector of the actions of

* Memorab. ibid. cap. 2. p. 12.

of men, that such doctrine had a direct tendency, not only to restrain them from all outward acts of impiety, injustice, and every base and unworthy practice, but to inspire his associates with that inward mental sense of virtuous conduct, which would have its happy effect in solitude, as well as in public society.

Having thus traced the most important points of Socrates's theology, it may be proper, before proceeding to the consideration of his moral scheme, to point out, more particularly, the proper use he made of his faculty in the *dialectic*, and the improvement this method of reasoning received from him. It has been observed how well he knew, by the management of the dialogue, to repel, or turn against the Sophist, his rash assertions, or fallacious arguments. But, by this, we are not to understand, that he only showed himself a more artful disputant, and could foil any of the arrogant tribe at his own weapons. If this had been all his aim, and performance, every principle, whether of morals, or other science, might still have remained in ambiguity, and no progress been made in the rules of just ratiocination. When the Sophist dared alledge, that even contradictory propositions might be true, what reasoning could suffice for his confutation? It was from the observance of this gross abuse of human reason, that Socrates, personating in dispute the *ἑρμηνεύς* *, as he was called among the Greeks, or the dissembler of his own knowledge, and the pretended admirer of that of others, asserted only, that he knew nothing, and put questions to others, but replied to none. Aristotle † mentions this last circumstance as an objection to Socrates's method of reasoning by the dialogue. But the only ground for this stricture is, that he made no answer to the Sophists, or those who aimed at no discovery of truth. With others, and more especially with his philosophical associates, he replied, and advanced assertions, with almost equal freedom that he put questions. If he inclined more to the side of the querist, it proceeded upon the properest motive and view. It was, that, by means of pertinent questions ‡ about the point

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* Quintilian, lib. 9. cap. 2. Cicer. de Offic. lib. 1. p. 365.

† Arist.

Sophist. Elench. lib. 2. cap. 34 p. 252.

‡ Cicer. ibid. de Inventione,

p. 67.

in debate, and requisitions of the most precise explication of the terms used in it, he might attain to such an accurate description of the thing, or idea investigated, as might distinguish it from every other conception, and leave no room for mistake or dubiety. It is, in short, well known, that Socrates introduced into the dialect, what is absolutely necessary in all true science, the use of exact and just definitions. The merit of it is allowed him by Cicero, and also by Aristotle himself, the father of logic, and the syllogism. Indeed, the examples of his ratiocination, given by Xenophon and Plato, are a clear evidence of it. In the latter, there is a parade, and a protraction of the questions, previous to the forming of the definition, that is excessive, and which, instead of reprobating the frivolity of the Sophists, appears too like an emulation of their equivocal and trifling disputation. In the former, there is no such affectation of distinctions without a difference, or any reiteration of the questions, beyond what perspicuity in the definition required *. On the contrary, as if Socrates wished to stigmatise every species of vague argumentation, we find him declining to enter into a dispute with Aristippus about the nature of good, general and abstract; and which admitted of no adequate, or unexceptionable definition. He therefore dismissed the fruitless controversy, with saying, that he knew nothing of that good in which no individual was concerned, and that was not alledged to be applicable to any particular subject.

Upon entering into the survey of Socrates's moral scheme, it may be observed to have been, not only comprehensive of all the virtues and duties relative to human life, but, from its simplicity, susceptible of the plainest, the readiest, and least embarrassed explication. In it, man was viewed as a single person, or as standing in a paternal relation to a family, or as connected with a public, or large community. The idea given in each of these heads was an intelligible one, and obvious to the meanest understanding; and the only investigation to be made was, what actions were suited to, and most becoming, man in these several capacities.

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* Cicer. *ibid.* lib. 3. cap. 8.

In considering the first of these, it was apparent, and undeniable, that every man was furnished by nature with a set of perceptions; and active powers; several of which he could exert independently of others, and without regard to connection with them. But in estimating the tendency, and the effects of these powers, it was in no respect necessary to inquire, or to attempt to ascertain, how they were generated in man, and after what manner their operation proceeded. It was sufficient to know, by experience, that they subsisted in a certain constitutional form; about which nothing could be affirmed with more evidence of truth, than that there was a part naturally subjected, and another which ruled *, distinguished by the names of body and mind, or the external and internal faculties. The sway of the latter over the former was no less requisite for the government of the appetites of sense, than for the safe conduct of the corporeal motions. Temperance, therefore, in the gratification of these appetites, must be acknowledged a law, in the human constitution, of equal necessity and importance with common prudence. Every man owes it to himself to be so far possessed of this virtue; first, for his preservation from disease, and then for the security and enlargement of what he finds agreeable to him. The good it brings, and the evil attending its contrary, extend alike to the body and the soul †. But the habit of it cannot be acquired without a certain vigour of mind, which enables men to assume a regular command over their natural desires; in that degree, at least, as to suspend compliance with them, when either hurtful in themselves, or obstructive of their attainment of greater satisfaction.

To be in this habit of virtue is more especially necessary to men, who are placed in situations that call them to attend not only to their own safety, and welfare, but to those of others with whom they are connected. Ill would he perform the part of a father of a family, who, when his children's health required it, could not abridge the hours of his repose, or undergo trouble, to procure medicine for them, or some means of relief. What sort of magistrate would he prove, who should prefer his private ease, or pleasure, to the most urgent business of the state? In

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* Cicer. *ibid.* lib. 4. cap. 3. p. 286.† *Ibid.* cap. 5. p. 316.

what esteem, or of what utility, would the general of an army be, who could not patiently endure the cold of the camp, and the fatigue of the march, and be vigilant in observing and baffling the designs of the enemy? But, in all these cases, it is manifest, that there is a discipline of the mind, or a moral one, pointed out by nature to man; and so exacted of him, that, without it, nothing in human life could be turned to its proper account.

Other teachers of wisdom, said Antipho to him, with a sneer, have commonly shown men how productive its study was of substantial pleasure*; but, according to your doctrine, and the practice you enjoin, philosophy is no better than a school of *penury and patience*. It may be demonstrated, said Socrates, that the real, and most genuine pleasures, are to be found upon the side of moderated appetites, and virtuous temperance, and not on that of the indulged desires. But, since you seem to place felicity in multiplied gratifications, I must dissent from your opinion, and shall briefly tell you what is mine. To have no wants is the attribute of a divinity. To have the fewest, therefore, is to approach the nearest to what is divine. If, to the first, the most excellent good be allowed to belong, the advancement made towards it, in the second, must be accounted an excellence, and a similar perfection.

Aristippus, yet more remarkable than Antipho for libertine sentiments on morals, had often endeavoured to maintain, against Socrates, that the life of sensual pleasure was the best, and only eligible one. "I shall readily grant you," said he, "that the offices of magistracy, and other civil functions in your Grecian commonwealths, especially in the manner in which they are commonly executed, must be laborious indeed, and, therefore, ought to be accounted impositions upon individuals, that no wise man should be resigned to, but by all means avoid. In many respects they lay restraints upon men, and often interfere with their greatest pleasures, and render them drudges to others, their inferiors too, for the sake of what is called the public good. But what fools are these men for so doing? And, may they not as well freely confess, that they have sold themselves to civil bondage, and slavery?" "I imagined,"

* Cicero, *ibid.* lib. 1. cap. 6.

imagined," said Socrates, "that you had already granted, that the rank in civil life to which authority belongs, was preferable to that which is chiefly characterised by obedience. But, since you appear now to retract that concession, and to estimate these two conditions of life by a different rule, it may be necessary to resume the question, and to consider with more attention, Whether those to whom the supreme authority, in different states and kingdoms, belongs, or those who are subjected to that authority, may be reckoned to live in the most agreeable manner? And, in this general view of the question, it may fall to be debated, Whether the Persians, who are masters in Asia, have any advantage, in respect of civil felicity, over the Phrygians, who are under their dominion? and, in like manner, Whether the Scythians in Europe, who have the Meotae for their tributaries, or the Carthaginians in Africa, who give law to the people in Lybia, are upon no better footing for the enjoyments of political life, than these their subjects? If the question be only put, in reference to the commonwealths of Greece, the state of it will be, What difference is there in the two conditions of the rulers, and the ruled, in these governments, to render that of the former more disagreeable, and disadvantageous to the happiness of life, than that of the latter?"

"All this investigation," replied Aristippus, "may be spared, since the principle I hold will not be in the least affected by any result of it. To me, the preferable condition in life is, neither that of the governing, or the governed, but a middle station between the two; which, being a release from the thralldom of both, and favourable to liberty of action, gives the fairest prospect of felicity." "If it were true," answered Socrates, "that the condition you point out, for shunning what you reckon the hateful extremes, could be so ordered, as to be disconnected with men, it might be allowed, that what you have now advanced has the force of an argument: But I understood always, that you meant to live in civil society; and, in that case, you will find it no easy matter to rank yourself, neither amongst those who rule, or those who obey. In all governments, you know, these distinctions are fundamental ones; and the men in power, you must remember, are apt to use great freedom, both in public and in private, as to the treatment of their inferi-
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ors. Altogether undisturbed, no political state is found to be. Men may sow and plant, and yet be dispossessed of the fruit of their labours, if they have any contiguity with the more warlike; and, it is no uncommon thing to see the indolent and dastardly, even under the same governments, insulted and injured by the audacious." "I acknowledge," said Aristippus, "that such occurrences there may be in your turbulent republics; and, therefore, I take care to include myself in none of them. A citizen at large, and a guest alike, I am every where, but have no concern with any particular community."

"It must be owned," said Socrates, "that you have conceived the matter very shrewdly. For, since the days of Sennes, and Sciron, and Procrustes *, are past with us, strangers are no longer exposed to inhuman treatment: Yet still, when rulers, in their native cities, find it necessary to have laws enacted for their greater security, and even to guard against injuries, by increasing the number of their friends; whence do you suppose that a protection is derived to you, which the natives cannot altogether count upon, when you go defenceless upon a journey, or enter a city in the habit of a stranger, which marks you out to the lawless as one easily to be assaulted? I am a citizen at large, you say, and therefore trust I am safe. The public cryer, indeed, in every city, proclaims that all strangers shall be protected: But what assurance have you that it shall be so. Is not the care, the assiduity, and fidelity of the magistrates, in executing their charge, which you began with reprobating, your only sufficient one? Unless, perhaps, you choose to say, that your apparent insignificance rendered you no object of assault, or depredation."

"There is a distinction," said Aristippus, "that I have heard you insist upon, relative to this subject, but which I do not well comprehend, between pain or trouble felt by those who willingly undergo it, and that which others sustain, but not from inclination, or choice. Is not the sensation of pain the same in both; and what difference does it make to the

* Cum fuerit Sciron levis, torvusque Procrustes,
Et Sennes.

Ovid. Epist. 1. Phyl. Demoph. et Metamorph. lib. 7.

the body that bears it, whether the will acquiesce in it or not?" "Is it possible," answered Socrates, "that you can really think, when voluntary and involuntary bearing of trouble is spoken of, that men only use a different mode of expressing not only the same sensation, but an equal measure and degree of it? Does it create no difference to the man's feeling, whether he be constrained to endure hunger and thirst, or makes it his choice to suffer them, only while he is so inclined. Admitting the bodily sensation to be the same, and equal, yet what a disparity must there be in the state of his mind? In the one case, there is a sensible elevation of spirit, excited by the hope of his accomplishing some favourite purpose. In the other, sad dejection takes place, from the sense of constraint; and, you may as well conclude the voluntary toil of the huntsman to be no more agreeable to him, than the forced one is to the game he pursues, as imagine, that acting or suffering with free will, or contrary to it, is justly to be classed under the same predicament.

"But," continued Socrates, "it is to be further adverted to, upon this subject, that pleasures attained by no effort, and which are, as it were, engendered from the facility of the mind in indulging every desire, are by no means reckoned those salutary to mankind. Ask the masters of the *Gymnasia*, and they will tell you, that a good constitution of body is never to be procured in this way; nor does it contribute to men's proficiency in any laudable study. Nay, it is chiefly by the exercise of the tolerant powers of the mind that they can be qualified for noble and worthy undertakings. So the best judges of antiquity have declared; and with them several of the most celebrated poets have also agreed. To this purpose, Hesiod and Epicharmus, among others, might be quoted; but the argument is illustrated at greater length, and with peculiar propriety of reasoning, in Prodicus's fable of the Judgment of Hercules, which represents him, at the age of manhood, deliberating with himself what course of life he ought to pursue, and in this critical juncture to be accosted by two female forms, the goddesses of Pleasure, and Virtue."

To give a version of this much admired moral piece, which has been already done with sufficient exactness and elegance, would be superfluous. But, considering it not only as having Socrates's general appro-
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bation for the sentiments it contains, but as a compendious view of the arguments he himself chose to make use of, in demonstrating the preference of virtue to pleasure, we shall endeavour to collect the several topics insisted upon in the fable, and the result of the reasoning upon each side of the question, as an authorized and proper supplement to the moral doctrines of the philosopher.

It was obvious, and granted by all philosophers, that the corporeal senses were the earliest solicitors for attention to their objects. With propriety, therefore, it is said in the fable, that the goddess of Pleasure advanced with hasty steps, and prevented Virtue in her address to Hercules. This circumstance, however, is not to be interpreted as if nature, by this precedency given to the operation of the senses, had marked them for any more excellency than that of their necessary and immediate use in the human frame. Infancy thus precedes manhood, with the distinction only of its imbecillity. But the influence of the early and daily repeated gratification of the senses is great, and would, by impressing the imagination, prevent the energy of reason itself, if it were not checked by early discipline. This the prudence of parents administers to their offspring; and the more advanced in life readily prescribe it to the young and unexperienced. Upon the supposition of its not being, in some degree, undergone, there must be, what is fancied of Hercules, a more than ordinary vigour of the rational faculty, which, looking forward to the consequences of actions, forms a proper judgment of their nature and eligibility.

Pleasure's address to him is in the most alluring strain. The way she proposes to lead him presented nothing but what was easy and agreeable. It was free from all intrusion of pain or trouble, and strewed with whatever was delightful to the senses. The dangers of war, and the labours of business, were to be far removed from him. The only object of his study would be, in what manner his senses might be most deliciously regaled, and what might quicken, and add new relish to their pleasures. This engaging attention was the chief, and only one required of him. Any apprehension there needed not be of a penury of these delights; or of a necessity of purchasing the means of them by labour of any kind. "The votaries of pleasure," said she, "may turn by any handle,

handle, or opportunity they can find, other mens toil to their benefit, and use all freedom in acquiring gratifications to themselves."

Such is the pleading the goddess of Pleasure uses to entice Hercules to become her follower; and it must be owned to represent, in true colours, that scheme of life which the sensualist, or one disposed to make corporeal pleasure his sole object, would most readily embrace. In this view of it, two things are observable. First, That what is alledged about the facility of gratifying the appetites of sense is a fallacious suggestion. However the truth may be dissembled, and the unexperienced mind flattered into this presumption, it is soon found to be a delusive one. There is a study, and a labour of its kind, inseparably connected with the inordinate indulgence of sensual pleasure, and which, beside being mean, and unworthy in itself, is generally productive of a measure of anxiety and disgust, not less than the hardships that the practice of virtue is reckoned to require. The minute attentions to stimulate, or soothe the appetites, and to refine on their gratifications, furnish a task to the voluptuary which he finds not easy to be performed. Therefore, in the reply made by Virtue to her antagonist, it is denied that the pursuits of pleasure can be unaccompanied with trouble. Secondly, It appears to be difficult in the extreme, if not impossible, to preserve unviolated, amidst the incitement of the sensual desires, a principle of justice, or common equity, towards other men. Hence, upon this head, the goddess of Pleasure cannot avoid, according to the fable, granting a latitude to her votaries, that renounces all restraint in the acquisition of selfish enjoyments: And it may, indeed, with reason, be doubted, whether there ever was a man in the world who prescribed no bounds to his sensual gratifications, and was eagerly bent on the fulfilment of them, and did not, at the same time, on various occasions, if not in the general line of his conduct, act an unjust or injurious part. So true it is, that the dissolute character naturally involves that of the dishonest and unequitable one.

The speech of *Virtue* to Hercules is introduced with a claim to dignity of character, in comparison with the shameful one of her antagonist. The superiority of human beings, under a virtuous regulation of their natural appetites and passions, when viewed in contrast to the unregulated

regulated lives of the votaries of pleasure, is ascertained. The advantage the former have, in point of real pleasure, is shown. To this is added, the consideration of the honourable action of the man of virtue, and of its attendant, honest fame, which distinguish him above all others, and produce a confidence in the propriety, and steadiness of his conduct, in every station; whether he has to act his part where integrity and fidelity are required, or where industry is to be used, and danger incurred; whether he be the friend, or the companion, the counsellor in peace, or the associate in war; in all these situations the excellence of his character is rendered eminently conspicuous. Therefore, in death, he falls not unhonoured, or soon to be forgotten. His friends, his companions, his countrymen, join in revering his memory, and transmitting it with grateful applause to future generations.

There are some arguments insisted on by Virtue which deserve to be separately mentioned. Hercules is put in mind of his parentage, as a motive to virtuous action. The reputed son of Jupiter was not to dishonour his illustrious descent by a deportment unworthy of it. From the opinion that man, in his original, is more than an earth-born creature, it appears that Socrates derived a special argument for the exercise of virtue. The young hero is also told by the goddess, that, in consequence of his conforming to her dictates, he would have the honour of exhibiting her character, in its proper lustre, before men, and proving to them the happy effects attending its imitation. Thus, example in practice was taught to be the best illustration of the moral rule. That part of the reasoning, in which Virtue proves the excess and abuse of natural appetite to be destructive of real pleasure, is farther supported by the representation of suitable abstinence as the true *zest* of sensual pleasure, and labour the best sweetener of repose. "In the practice of both these," says she, "my friends find their account, by the sure relish they add to all their corporeal enjoyments."

In answer to Pleasure's descant upon the easy, the careless, and supine life of her followers, Virtue says to Hercules, "My aim, or wish, is not to deceive you with vain promises of exemption from all trouble, which never can be fulfilled, but to instruct you in what the gods have ordained to take place in human life. Their manifest appointment is, that
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nothing deserving the appellation of good or excellent should be attainable to men, without due labour and pains. To render them propitious to you, they must be worshipped: To engage the love of your friends, you must do them kind offices: To obtain public honours in any community, you must prove yourself, in some remarkable degree, profitable to it. Without culture, the bountiful earth produces not its fruits; nor, without attendance upon the cattle that graze upon it, can they be turned to proper advantage. To render the body robust, it must be hardened by exercise, and accustomed to undergo that toil, which the mind judges to be either necessary or convenient. To subdue enemies, or to protect friends, the discipline of war must be learned, not from theory only, but by practice in the field." This moral sentiment expressed in the fable, is the explication of that noted verse of the poet Epicharmus, in which it is said, *That the gods sell all good things to men at the price of labour.*

We conclude the dissertations of Socrates upon morals, with observing, that he held forth certain laws of a moral and civil kind, as prescribed by nature to mankind *, and generally acknowledged among them. "They are unwritten," said he, "but they are known and understood in all languages, and propagated in all countries. Men never met together, nor could they ever meet, in any general convention, to assent to them as convenient. Yet, as if this common approbation of them had been obtained, men in all nations agree, that the gods are to be worshipped, parents to be honoured, benefactors to be repaid with suitable offices; and to these we may add another precept of nature, although there may be instances of its being contraveened, that *parents and children do not cohabit.* Whence, then, have these laws their prescription; and who are to be reputed their founders? Surely, none but the gods; who have also ordained penal sanctions to them, and which cannot be evaded, as often happens to those annexed to the violation of human institutions. But the authority of these divine prescriptions is such, that the trespass always carries along with it a due punishment. The hateful and pernicious effects of the prohibited action are found to

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* Memorab. lib. 4. cap. 4. p. 299.

wait upon the transgressors; a sanction this which no human wisdom or power can appoint; and, therefore, must be concluded to have its original from the gods. Things that are just can only have the stamp of their authority; and it appears to be their will, that all human ordinances, under the name of Laws, should be consistent with justice.

Upon the whole, it must be acknowledged, that Socrates, as a moral philosopher, merited the high character assigned him by antiquity. In treating of the Pythagorean philosophy, we have seen, indeed, a surprising refinement in this branch of knowledge, and, in some respects, a sublimity of sentiment, and an extended theory of principles and arguments, which we are not warranted to ascribe to the Athenian sage, unless we admit, as his genuine doctrines, all that Plato has delivered in his name. This opinion, as contrary to that of antiquity, and not reconcilable with what must be allowed to Plato's own inventive genius, and extensive erudition, can never be reasonably entertained. It is indeed allowed, that, both in the general doctrines, and particular arguments, the disciple takes a compass wide of those appropriated by other authors to his master, and, that, therefore, critical judgment is to be exercised, and a proper selection made from him of the Socratic doctrines. But, in various points, this cannot be done with certainty. In the preceding pages, however, an essay towards the requisite determination has been ventured; but with what justice or propriety must be submitted to competent judges. There are a few other moral sentiments, together with Socrates's opinion of the immortality of the human soul, that will more properly be included in the next section. What we have here to subjoin, in farther approbation of his moral scheme, may be reduced to one remark. When we consider the principles and arguments used in it, in respect of their propriety and simplicity, as well as their evidence, and compare them with those of other philosophers, vamped with metaphysical ideas, and logical distinctions, they must be acknowledged to be such as coincide more directly with the general notions of mankind of moral duty, and its obligations. The theological ideas, without being abstruse or perplexed, serve to illustrate and confirm the moral ones; and the special proof of any principle is rested, not upon metaphysical refinements, but traced from the most natural conceptions,
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and experiences of the human mind. Hence it appears, that the ethical science is not the progeny of the schools, nor depends upon the researches of the learned, for the demonstration of its principles, but hath, in all its great lines, a more obvious and intelligible foundation, placed in the common sense and reason of mankind. And hence it was that Socrates * took his illustrations of various moral duties and precepts from the rules observed by men in the practice of the common, as well as the more liberal arts of life; and discovered, indeed, a peculiar ingenuity he had in turning the observations he made on the trades and arts of the potters, the braziers, the leather-dressers, and shoemakers, into the justest and most instructive lessons in the moral conduct of human life.

S E C T.

* Plato in Convivio.

SECTION II.

Socrates's appearances in public affairs.—The offences taken against him.—His judicial accusation, and trial.—The capital sentence pronounced upon him, and the circumstances of his death.

IN the unhinged condition of the Athenian government, and when it had only passed from one species of tyrannical rule to another, it may be accounted a palpable error in Socrates to have imagined, that some signal reformation of the depraved manners of his countrymen could be effectuated, by the sole means of his instructing the youth of rank in the science of morals. From his ardent zeal, and assiduity in the prosecution of this purpose, it would appear as if he had thought of accomplishing a change in the temper and spirit of the people, equal to what Solon had formerly done in the form of the government. In times preceding, several of the wise men, and, hitherto, various of the sophists, had joined political schemes to their profession of wisdom and science; and the oratory of the latter had been sometimes subservient to the new modelling of states. It has been related, that Socrates had appeared with much reputation in the Athenian army, and, when he betook himself to the teaching philosophy, he did not decline acting in the offices of civil government *. He was a member of the supreme council, or senate; and was present at the remarkable trial and judgment of the ten Athenian

* Xenophon Hist. Graec. lib. 1. Memorab. cap. 1.

Athenian commanders, who, although victorious, were accused of not burying the bodies of those who fell in the naval action at Arginusa, with the Lacedemonians. He continued to hold his place in the council, and to perform the functions of it, so far as could be done, under the thirty tyrants. In this political station he attached himself to no party; but, in every important question, or contest, he only considered how it became a virtuous man, and an honest citizen, to decide and to act *. This integrity in judgment was evinced in the case of the accused generals. When he beheld that constitutional law about to be violated, which required that the trial, previously to its being carried before the assembly of the citizens, should be authorised by the senate, he strenuously opposed this enormity; and, when his colleagues, intimidated with the menaces of the multitude, yielded to it, he alone, despising all danger, dared to give his voice against the illegal procedure.

By this instance of intrepid integrity he did not recommend himself to the tyrannical partizans; and, at the same time, he made a considerable forfeiture of his popularity among the common citizens. Some of his *apologues* being taken notice of by the former, he was required to be more sparing of them, and not to express himself in the terms he had done, about *herds of cattle, and their keepers*. To Critias, chiefly, he owed the injunction he received, not to converse with the youth. His expostulations with this apostate from moral instruction, about the sense in which this order was to be understood, showed that he was not easily to be turned from his way. Under just suspicion of being disaffected to the tyrants, he was tolerated by them, not from lenity, or good will, but from plain evidence that he was unsupported by party, and that nothing *valuable* could be obtained from his condemnation. He is said, however, to have been acquainted with the enterprise secretly formed by Thrasylbulus, for the delivery of Athens from the insufferable outrages of the *thirty*, and which proved successful.

Another set of men to whom Socrates became obnoxious, were the comic writers for the stage. Whether from a disgust of their compositions, and licentious style, or from a disapprobation of the extravagant
passion.

* Xenophon. Hist. *ibid.* Plato in *Apologia*. Plutarch in *Solone*.

passion of the Athenians for these entertainments, he never willingly attended the theatre *. It was only upon the representation of some of Euripides's tragedies that he chose to be present; and, even then, in case of any ambiguity in the moral sentiment, he was apt to show dissatisfaction, and retire. To Aristophanes, the boldest, and most satirical of all comic poets, this would appear a piece of philosophic pride, or formality, which it became him to ridicule. He therefore produced his comedy of the *Clouds*, in which, although more decency of style was observed than in his other pieces, a *travestie* was made of Socrates's character, to the utmost pitch of extravagance. He was exhibited as a fantastic *virtuoso*, occupied with frivolous studies, as a wrangler in argument, and one who, scorning the deities of his country, substituted in their place certain *daemons* of his own invention. It is related by several authors in what manner Socrates received this virulent attack upon him by the master of the comic stage. He came to the theatre; and that none might be at a loss to know who the personated Socrates was, he stood up in a conspicuous bench; and, when asked, if he was not provoked at this public ridicule of his character? "By no means," said he, "I rather think myself at a great feast, where every one enjoys me."

It yet remains to be determined by the critics, what reception the Athenians gave to the comedy of *the Clouds*, upon its being first acted; and whether, according to Ælian's account, they were only for a short space displeased with it, but soon applauded its exhibition, and were entertained with the theatrical derision of their celebrated philosopher. That author would create a persuasion by no means probable, when the dates of events in chronology are attended to, that Aristophanes was excited and bribed by Anytus and Melitus, the subsequent accusers of Socrates, to make an experiment on the disposition of the Athenians to bear the exposure of him to ridicule, whom they meditated to bring under a criminal trial. But the acknowledged interval of five Olympiads, or more than twenty years, from the first representation of this comedy, to the impeachment of Socrates, must be regarded as equivalent

* Ælian. Histor. var. lib. 2. cap. 13.

lent to a confutation of *Ælian's* narrative. The most probable opinion seems to be, that the first acting of the comedy was so ill received, and discouraged, that many years passed before its second representation; and that it might be revived on purpose by Socrates's enemies, to vilify him in the eyes of the people, and smooth the way to his criminal prosecution.

That Socrates, however inoffensive, might give displeasure to some individuals, and create private enemies, may easily be supposed, when we reflect on the delicacy of the task in which he was engaged; as it involved not only the charge, but frequently the approbation, or disapprobation, of the youth under his discipline, in respect of their tempers and capacity, and sometimes a judgment either required by the parents, or voluntarily pronounced by himself, about their qualification for particular professions and employments in civil life. It happened in the case of Anytus's son, that Socrates expressed himself with freedom about his father's improper destination of him for the trade of a leather-dresser. It was, however, by secretly following this occupation, that Anytus, who took upon himself the name of an orator, had much increased his fortune. "It surely is not necessary," said Socrates, "that the son of one who has got wealth enough to make a figure in the republic, should be bred to the mean employment of dressing hides *." Pure concern for the youth, whose disposition Socrates had observed to be diametrically opposite to such a business, had given occasion to this animadversion; to which some raillery against the father, who persisted in his resolution, was added. To another than Anytus, the motive Socrates had for interfering would have excused the freedom he used. But vulgar souls take the quickest offence. The raillery was considered by Anytus not only as exposing his intention about his son, but as a direct satire upon himself, for privately making his riches by a trade, of which he renounced the name. As the course taken by him was not altogether a secret in Athens, the ridicule of it, although disagreeable, could not be deemed a slander. While some, perhaps, diverted themselves with Socrates's raillery on the subject, Anytus's dark mind

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* Memorab. in Socrat. defens. Coram Judic. p. 346.

brooded over the affront, and sought after revenge. A public accusation of the philosopher, upon the grounds suggested by Aristophanes, appeared to him the readiest and most eligible, especially as the charge of impiety, which the vulgar citizens were apt to believe, would induce the credit of the other articles. Melitus, a novice at the bar *, and one ready to undertake any litigious cause, willingly became his associate; and their party was reckoned complete by the accession of Lyco, a known and practised rhetorician. The task of impeachment was divided among them, to give it the appearance of an accusation by three classes of men, the poets, the orators, and artificers. The chief articles insisted upon were, contempt of the gods of Athens, and the introduction of other divinities; corruption of the youth, and arguing indiscriminately upon both sides of a question, so as to make reason confute itself.

It is almost unnecessary to recite the confutations of this unfounded charge against the Athenian sage, which several of his philosophic friends thought it their duty to publish after his death; but which he, answering before his judges, neither studied, nor accounted worthy of his attention. It may be proper, however, to observe, that, notwithstanding he entertained those rational principles of theology which have been mentioned, and supported them in conferences with his speculative associates, he did not treat the public religion with outward contempt or scorn, but, in this respect, showed all decorum, both in his language and behaviour. This, certainly, arose not from dubiety, or want of full conviction of the truth of the principles he held †, since he animadverted with particular asperity on those philosophers, who, setting no bounds to their scepticism, endeavoured to overthrow the justest conclusions of reason, for the constitution of the world by a divine power. Considering the narrow limits of human knowledge, he hesitated not to pronounce the physical architects of the universe, who excluded the intervention of deity, fools, or infatuated men. Yet, addicted to freedom in philosophic conversation as he was, he gave himself no liberty ‡ in speaking derisively, or in serious reproach, of the religion of his country. To this,

* Plato in Apolog. Maxim. Tyr. Differ. 39. p. 406.
cap. 1. p. 8.—9.

† Ibid.

‡ Memorab. lib. 1.

this, perhaps, he might be induced, not from prudence and decorum only, but from observing, that the contrary practice was more frequently the mark of presumption and licentiousness, than of superior knowledge, and the dictates of an enlightened mind. He endeavoured, indeed, to reprobate some of the more absurd and glaring of the popular superstitions, such as those respecting auguries and divinations, from unusual sounds in the air, or the different flights and incantations of birds; alledging, that if presages of good and evil were imparted by the gods, it was more credible that they were communicated directly to men themselves, than by such obscure conveyances. Upon matters which men had the means of knowing, or the faculty of discovering, themselves, or could learn from others, he declared that the oracles ought not to be consulted. These were not singular opinions delivered by him, but such as were prevalent among the more intelligent classes of men. Yet upon these pretences did his enemies found their charge of his impiety.

The allegation of his corrupting the youth was still more lamely supported; being reduced to two propositions, which tallied not well with each other, and yet neither of them amounted to a proper accusation. The one was, that he acquired so great influence over the youth, that they preferred his company to that of their parents, or nearest relations, and were more observant of his advice and directions than of all other commands that might be given them. The second implied the inefficacy of his discipline, which, upon some individuals, had not accomplished the due reformation. As to the respect and deference paid to his instructions * by the youth who attended him, Socrates said, that he claimed no more, in competition with their parents or friends, than what was allowed to all teachers or instructors of others in particular arts, or in cases where proper habits either of body or mind were to be formed. The masters of the Gymnastic exercises required a preferable regard to be given their rules, and so did the physicians; and the same necessary concession was made in favour of all other laudable discipline. But why was not Alcibiades cured of his ambition, and Critias of his intemperance; by the failure of which they became the authors of many calamities

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* Memorab. *ibid.* in Socrat. Defens.

mities to the state? Of such a disposition, says Xenophon *, were both these youths, that, if the deity had resigned it to their option, whether they would live a long life, in the manner Socrates directed, or go to death instantly, there was little doubt of their preferring the last alternative. While they remained with him, they appeared to imbibe the principles of virtue; but early engaging in pursuits adverse to all moral impressions, they soon reverted to their natural propensities. What master or tutor, in any science, is made responsible for the improvement and progress of his élèves, who can, at their pleasure, escape from his discipline? The ablest in this profession can only reckon upon their advancement while they advert to his rules, and do not either despise them, or choose to contradict them in practice. A god he must be, and not a man, who undertakes to ensure a superior efficacy to his wisdom and ability in instruction. In correspondence with this last reflection, Socrates taught the necessity of some divine admonition and aid to the consummate practice of virtue. It need hardly be subjoined, that it was one of Aristophanes's fictions to hold him forth to the vulgar as only a more artful disputant in the manner of the Sophists.

When the criminal process was ready to be commenced before the judges in the court of the *Areopagus*, Socrates was asked by Hermogenes, Whether he had meditated a proper defence? "*I have prepared none,*" replied the philosopher, "*nor shall I think of any other, but that which the course of my life affords: It is the only just and honourable one, and ought to be the most effectual for my vindication.*" Upon perusing a defensive oration †, presented to him by Lysias, the celebrated rhetorician, "it is abundantly fine," said he, "but to deliver it is unsuitable to me." He had scarcely ever mentioned the prosecution amongst his friends. Conscious of his innocence, and of the honest and unhired labours of his life, now accumulated with years, for the good of the commonwealth, he considered it to be a gross abuse of the laws, and contrary to the protection those of Athens promised, and the value they set upon the known probity of every citizen, if he, or any other virtuous man, could not only be arraigned, but suffered to fall a victim to mani-
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* Memorab. lib. 1. cap. 2.

† Cicer. de Orat. lib. 1.

fest calumny and defamation. To owe his vindication and acquittance, not solely to the candour and equity of the judges, but to the public appearance of friends, and the commiseration that might be excited by the studied periods of a pathetic harrangue, he accounted unworthy of his character, and not altogether equitable in itself; since the deliverance he might by these methods obtain, a meaner citizen, however innocent, could not expect. To these sentiments, he doubtless joined a pardonable disdain of the characters of his accusers. What he thought of the integrity of his judges is uncertain *; but he believed, that any sentence they could pronounce against him, would redound not to his dishonour, but to their own, and that of his malicious adversaries. The court of the Areopagus, though still in reputation for justice, had rather declined from the former estimate of its judicial procedure since the time of Pericles's administration †, when it underwent a constitutional alteration, by the number of its members being too much increased. The variation, also, of their number, at one time and another, which happened from there being accidentally more or fewer who had the requisite qualification of admission, was a circumstance unfavourable to the uniformity of their decisions.

When the day of trial came, Melitus, Anytus, and Lyco, took each his turn in harranguing the judges ‡. There was, among them, no considerable display of oratory, and much less of just argument. But, had there had been a shew of both, the difference would have been imperceptible to Socrates, who appeared not the least attentive to the strain of their pleadings. Yet, when it ceased, he seemed to be roused, and to cast an indignant look upon his accusers; to which was added a forced smile in eyeing his judges. In an elevated tone of voice, and, as Cicero expresses it, rather like one master of the tribunal itself, than a pannel or suppliant, he entered upon his reply. Then, as if resenting the

* Xenophon. in Defens.
ties of Greece, vol. 1. p. 102.

† Plutarch. in Pericl. Potter's Antiqui-

‡ In the judicial forms used in Athens, and also followed in those of Rome, much, if not the greatest part of the pleading, was addressed, not so directly to the judges, as from one of the parties to the other.

the unmerited impeachment, he asked Melitus, how he came to understand that he dishonoured the gods of Athens, or substituted others in their room, or entertained unbecoming thoughts of them, when his public behaviour in attending the solemnities of their worship, a truth well known to him, as well as all others, bore a contrary testimony? "Is it," said he, "in part, or wholly, inferred from my affirming, that a divine voice has frequently restrained me in purposes of action? Is it not evident, that, in this, I rather maintain the common belief, that what is called *divinity* by us is prescient, and can foretel, at his pleasure, future events to men, by voices immediately directed to them. Such are those heard from the shrines of the gods, which their prophets and priests have the faculty of understanding, and the privilege of delivering to others. Is it either more rational, or more pious, to assert, that these communications are competent to birds and beasts, but not to men? If I have delivered any thing to my friends, under the name of a divination, let their testimony be called for, which can best instruct, either the veracity, or the fallacy, of what was announced? But none of them, I believe, will say that the daemon's admonition erred." Here a murmur arose among the judges; some of them being offended at his pretending to have an intercourse with the celestial beings, equal to that enjoyed by their priests and oracles; and others, because they considered what he said about his intelligence by means of a daemon as chimerical or fictitious. Their displeasure was not abated, when he proceeded to declare, that he had the authority of the Oracle of Delphos for his being thus singularly favoured of the gods, when it pronounced him *the wisest of men*. This strain, which rose so much to the boastful, and upon which he dwelt, without regard to the offence it gave, was such a contrast to what he was ever known to use, or to assume, upon any other occasion, that it was evident to all that he scorned the judicial inquisition upon his character, as what the court of the Areopagites ought not to have admitted, and what he thought they could not admit, in any case similar to his, without prejudice or discouragement to every citizen, who had lived so long in Athens with honest fame. To claim, in this shape, not justice only, but approbation, and this, too, with little deference to the judgment of the court, upon his character, was what the Areopagites could

could not understand. If he, as a pannel, gave offence, they, with the pride of supreme judges, took it heinously. In a precipitate manner they pronounced him *guilty*, by a plurality of their suffrages *, which, altogether, amounted to two hundred and eighty one. Before they proceeded to this sentence, Plato, perceiving that the judges by no means relished Socrates's vindication of himself, had ascended the bench for oration; but he was repelled, by an exclamation to *withdraw*.

From a peculiar form in the procedure of the court of the Areopagites, in criminal cases, a second, and final verdict, yet remained to be pronounced by them. By that which they had passed, Socrates was found *guilty*, or condemned to suffer a legal penalty; but a repetition of the suffrages of the judges was necessary, in order to determine the amount of that penalty. This usage, which Cicero † remarks as a singularity in the Athenian law, deserves observation, as analogous, although not equal, to that of the verdict of the *jury*, and the sentence of the judges, known with us. The dividing the judgment into two parts, one for ascertaining the criminality, and another for deciding the punishment, was certainly an approach to what we justly esteem the most perfect and happiest model of the criminal, and even of the civil jurisdiction, by means of *the trial by the jury*. It left room for the judges to reconsider the sentence they had given; and, as it might, on reflection, appear to be faulty, either from too much lenity, or severity, to correct the error by the second and last they had to pronounce. The proper effect of the usage was apparent upon this occasion. Provoked as the Areopagites were, they could not, in the judgment of Socrates's offence, hold him punishable by death, which was required in his impeachment as agreeable to the laws. As was usual in cases not capital, the question was put to him, "Having offended against the laws, what compensation do you offer; and for what pecuniary mulct can you hold yourself responsible ‡?" "For one mina only §," replied Socrates. Alarmed at what

* Diogenes Laert. in Socrat.

† Cicer. de Orat. lib. i. p. 132.

‡ Plato in Apolog.

§ It is to be observed, that Socrates's valuation of his dwelling-house, and all his moveables, as given by him, in Xenophon's Oeconomics, was no more than five minae.

what might be the interpretation of the judges upon this mean offer, and that they would be apt to think it a burlesque of their sentence, his friends who stood by called out, "thirty," or, as some say, "fifty minae;" for which Crito, Appollodorus, and Critobulus, declared themselves ready to become sureties. But against this proposition Socrates strenuously remonstrated; alledging, that it implied his having committed a public trespass; which was so far from being the truth, that he might, for the public and private good he had done, justly claim that acknowledgment which Athens had appointed for the benefactors of the commonwealth, to be maintained in the Prytanaeum at the public expence. Unquestionable it is, that, without regard to his distinguished merit, and character as a philosopher, which had brought renown and benefit to Athens, and in the estimate only of his behaviour, and services, as a man and a citizen, Socrates could not be reckoned to arrogate more honour or emolument to himself than he was fully entitled to; and, it may be added, that, if his claim had been allowed, his many good offices were not requited. But the judges were now in no disposition to enter into sentiments of this kind. As if they had only waited for any further instance of his opposition to their decision, they, upon the reiteration of their suffrages, condemned him to suffer death, by the addition of eighty more to the former majority; a number which nearly comprehended the whole votes of the court.

Upon this view of Socrates's condemnation, it may be reckoned that he discovered too much vehemence of temper, and an unsuitable disdain of the judgment of a court, before which his trial was competent, and, in these respects, prompted the unjust sentence passed upon him. To those, by whom no allowance is made for the quick sense of reproach and injury in an innocent mind, and for the natural recourse of virtue, when unworthily challenged, to self-estimation, or none for certain ideas of a consistency of character, in which philosophy places the real dignity of men; the answer found in Xenophon must be given *, that,

minae, scarcely above L. 16 Sterling, but equal in value, of money in the present times, to at least twelve times that sum. Socrates's offered fine of himself, being thus a fifth of all he had, was not so diminutive, or, on his part, so ludicrous, as the judges conceived it to be.

* In Socrat. Defens. p. 331.

that, all circumstances being weighed, it was judged by him more eligible to die, than to prolong his life. This consideration, says that author, which best acquits him of imputed temerity, has been generally omitted by those who have taken much notice of his arrogant speech before the Areopagites. To other reasons assigned by him for not properly defending himself, this remarkable one was added: From a persuasion he had, that there was a peculiar benignity in the divine will extended to men, in his disagreeable situation, he thought he might be called upon to make his exit from life, in a manner which would neither be tedious to himself, nor burthensome to his friends, nor leave room for altercations with his enemies; and that, therefore, he concluded, upon the whole, it was best for him to be passive, and to expect, rather than to counteract, what destiny might have ordained for him.

That the undismayed countenance, which Socrates bore during the time of his trial, was only altered to a more chearful look, upon receiving his sentence, is related by every author who makes particular mention of the subject. It is likewise generally admitted, that the conclusive part of Plato's apology, in which the judges are more emphatically addressed, comprehends the sentiments expressed by his master upon that occasion; and which Cicero, who says he never read it in the original without tears, has copied out, with some abbreviations *, to the following purpose. "Athenian judges: It is not without reason that I entertain the best hopes, that the doom to which you have consigned me, may, in its result, prove a happy one for me: For, of two things in it, the one or the other must be found true. Death must either utterly extinguish all the senses I have as a man, or transfer me to some other place where they may be exercised. Which soever of these consequences be supposed, whether death shall involve the senses in perpetual ruin, or whether they shall, in some shape, remain, yet death must be accounted a gain; such a gain, indeed, it is, in the first case, as may be reckoned superior to that of many waking days. A night although it be, it is like one passed in a profound sleep, undisturbed with dreams, and continued, without the measure of time, through all succeeding

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* Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 1. p. 131.

ages. But, if what is generally credited be true, if death be a passage to those foreign shores, appointed for the reception of men after death, a felicity arises, far surpassing the other condition. An escape, it may be deemed by many, from nominal judges to real ones; to Minos and Rhadamanthus, to Æacus and Triptolemus, invested not with the title only, but with the character of their function. To have the prospect of meeting, in these regions, with men who have acted a just part in life; with Orpheus, Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod, Who would not cheerfully undertake the journey out of life, and account it no common road to happiness? In my opinion, it would be worth dying many deaths to be assured of attaining what my soul wishes; and to feel the delight I would have in the company of Palamedes, and Ajax, and other innocent men, who were circumvented and injured by the judgments passed upon them. I would even take upon me to scan the prudence of Agamemnon in the exercise of his sovereign command over the Greeks, and compare it with that of Ulysses and Sisyphus; nor yet, on account of such honest criticism of their characters as I have used among men, would I be apprehensive of their indignation, or of being *condemned by them*. The few who have acquitted me need not be in the least disturbed about the fate I am to undergo; but rather cherish the persuasion, that no real evil can befall a virtuous man, whether in life or in death. His concerns are not overlooked by the immortal gods; nor do I reckon the present event a fortuitous one to me. Under this sentiment, I can entertain no anger either against my accusers, or those who have condemned me; unless, perhaps, I may have some quarrel with their presumption, in imagining that it was in their power to do me an essential prejudice. But it is now time that I should quit this place, and go to that of death; and that you, my judges, should hold on in the beaten tract of life: But which of these courses is the best I pretend not to determine. This knowledge, in my opinion, is competent to no human being, and is the privilege only of the immortal gods." How far more, adds the Roman academician, would it be my election, to be possessed of the soul of this sage, than to be enriched with the fortunes of all his judges! Although he denies, that, beside the gods, none knew whether it might be better to live or to die, yet enough had been previously intimated

estimated by him, to make his real sentiments of the matter well understood. But it was requisite, in consistency with what he had all along professed, to say, in the end, *that he affirmed nothing*.

After his sentence was pronounced, Socrates was conducted to prison by the eleven officers of justice, and had the chains used to secure condemned prisoners fastened upon him. But the commencement of the public solemnity of the *Theoris*, instituted in memory of Theseus's escape, with his companions *, from the *Minotaur* and Labarinth of Crete, admitted not of any one being legally put to death, until the religious procession made to the temple of Apollo, in the isle of Delos, was completed. The accidental detention of the famous ship, which was, notwithstanding the change † of every plank and pin, still held to be the vessel used by Theseus, sometimes prolonged the finishing the ceremonies, by its returning to Athens, for a considerable time; and it was extended upon this occasion to thirty days. Socrates's friends had, by this means, an opportunity of frequently visiting him when in custody; access to which, at stated hours, was permitted them, under little other restraint. Their first interview with him, as described by Plato, was attended, on their part, with those confused sensations of grief and perplexity which the mind feels when first struck with deep concern, and resiles from them, as if unwilling, or incapable, to receive at once all the heavy impression. Socrates's composure, and his conversation, which altered not from the ordinary strain ‡, proved their best relief; and some of them soon began to think of another kind of remedy; which was that of his escaping from prison. In the judgment of all, it might have been effectuated with little difficulty, or hazard of misgiving; but the proposal was entirely rejected by him, as carrying along with it a departure from character, a trespass upon the laws, and which, were it not attended with these objections, would take from him all the relish of life.

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* Plato in *Phaedone*, Xenoph. *ibid.* lib. 4. p. 325. † The case of the ship, in a long course of time, altered in every part by gradual repairs, gave occasion in the Schools, to treat the question of identity and diversity of physical bodies.

‡ Plato in *Critone*, vel de eo quod agendum est.

To enter into the detail of the arguments used by Socrates in proof of the immortality of the human soul, as we find them stated in Plato's *Phaedo*, would be an anticipation of the copious dialectic reasoning of the latter upon this subject; the account of which belongs to that of his philosophy, to be given in its place. We shall therefore confine our recital to those passages in the *Phaedo*, which, from the circumstances marked in the narrative, are, in a manner, authenticated as genuine and real copies of the conversations he held, when in prison, with his philosophical friends. They include those of the last day of his life.

Upon the morning after the arrival of the ship from Delos, and when it was known to his associates that he must die before the sun-set of that day, by a draught of poison, they met together, and repaired to the jail. Upon entering it, they beheld Socrates resting upon his couch, with his chains taken off, and Xantippe holding by the hand her son, not yet in puberty, placed beside him. At their appearance she broke forth into a doleful vociferation; and was, by her husband's desire, conducted home. He then drew up his leg, and began to rub it with his hand. "What a surprising thing," said he, "is this sensation which men call pleasure, and how nearly connected with its contrary, pain? Both, indeed, cannot, in the same instant, be felt by the same person; yet it appears, that wherever there is a participation of the one, the other is, in a manner, necessarily induced. I imagine that *Æsop*, if he had made the observation, would have devised a fable about it, upon some such idea as this, That the divinity, willing to reconcile these two opposites to each other, found it could not be done in nature, and, therefore, solved the difficulty, by binding their ends together in a close knot; so that whosoever was overtaken with the one, should be sure to find the other a consequent to it. The painful compressure of my leg by the chain is now succeeded by a sensible pleasure." From this parody, it may be understood what estimate Socrates made of the providential dispensation of bodily pain, and pleasure, in the human and animal system of beings; and, considering how they appeared to be reciprocated, and to depend upon each other mutually for their production, that the former could not be accounted an absolute evil, when it tended to quicken the sense, and heighten the perception, of the latter.

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It having been said, occasionally, by Socrates, that he believed Euanus so true a philosopher, that he might most probably follow him, some time or other, in the choice he now made of death; Cebes desired an explication of this sentiment; especially as Socrates had always declared it to be a rational and just opinion, that men, in general, while in life, were under the custody and safe keeping of the gods. "How then," said Cebes, "can Euanus, or any philosopher, unless laid under the necessity the Athenians have imposed upon you to meet death, and to cause you to desire, rather than to avoid it, be supposed to have the liberty to choose between living and dying, and to dispose of themselves as they please. In consistency of reason, it ought rather to be concluded, that, being, as we are, under the kind tuition of the gods, we cannot betake ourselves to a better. Irrational souls may desire a change, without understanding why they should be so inclined; but the reflecting, and considerate, will not embrace this course, but upon some well grounded persuasion of improving their condition." Pleased with the propriety of the remark, Socrates said to those nearest him, "Cebes never fails to discover his accurate investigation of any unperspicuous point, and will admit upon no one's authority a controvertible topic to pass undiscussed. But I will grant him," continued he, "that I should be erroneous not to be concerned about death, if I did not think, that, in the migration from hence, I shall go to other intelligent beings, and good gods, and to the company of men who have quitted this life, with a lustre of virtue not now to be found amongst us. This hope I entertain, yet deliver it not as an assertion to be proved. But there is an argument upon the question by which a philosopher may be reasonably determined." Here he was interrupted by Crito looking steadfastly towards him, as if he had something to communicate. Being asked what it was? "I am admonished," said he, "that Socrates would do well not to speak too much, lest, being overheated, as the administrator of the poison says, he should be obliged to repeat the draught several times." "That," answered Socrates, "calls not for much attention. It is his office to prepare such a quantity as may serve for the repetition of the draught, or for a third, if it be found necessary." Resuming his discourse, he observed, "that all true disciples of philosophy would be, more than others,

others, liable to a just reproach, and expose the inutility of their study, if, accustomed as they were to speculate upon death, and consider themselves under the natural law of corporeal dissolution, they should, notwithstanding, appear startled or discomposed at the approach of an event, which, being inevitable, ought to be rendered familiar to all human minds." Simmias could not help smiling at this sentence; which, as turned in his imagination, implied, that to resign life upon any occasion, or demand, was an office to be expected of a philosopher. "Pleasantry," said he, "is now unseasonable; but it occurs to me, that some of our deriding wits would say, upon the facility of philosophers about dying,—That we heartily agree that they should indulge their persuasion, and act upon it; and not only yield themselves to death, but allow us to think that they deserved it.—I could," said Socrates, "excuse them for this raillery, were it not flattering their shallow conceptions too much, to admit their judgment either about a rule of life, or a sentiment of death, becoming rational men, and found in the breasts of true philosophers."

He was now asked by Crito, whether he had not some particular injunction to give his friends, respecting the charge of his children and family? "I have no other," replied he, "but to repeat what you have already heard from me: Study to be yourselves possessed of the good of virtue; and then, although you promise it not, I may be well assured, that any help which you can afford, or I desire, for those which are mine, will be extended to them; but that, otherwise, it will be in vain to expect it." "In what manner," added Crito, "do you wish that your funeral should be conducted?" "Bury me," replied Socrates, "in the way you think the most convenient; if, indeed, you can seize upon me, and I not escape from your hands." Then, with a smile, turning to the rest, "I cannot, it seems," said he, "persuade Crito, that I am that *being* called Socrates, capable of the rational discourse I now hold with you; but he thinks me to be nothing more than the carcass which he will presently behold; and, therefore, he asks how I am to be buried. Be you, my friends, sureties to him, but in a contrary way from what he would have been for me before the Athenian judges; not that I shall be sifted here, but that I shall certainly be gone from you.

you. He may then more easily endure my death; and, whether my body be burned, or be interred, rest satisfied, that *I* myself shall suffer no distress. He may, therefore, at the funeral, forbear to cry, in the common language of the deplorers, Socrates is laid upon the pile, or that he is buried in the earth. The expression, believe me, Crito, as in itself an impropriety, and derogatory to human souls, ought to be corrected. Take courage, then, and say, that you lay not *me*, but my body, in the dust; and let it be done as you think decency, and regard to the laws, require." Upon his coming from the bathing room, his wives, Xantippe and Myrto, followed by two young boys, and another scarcely grown up to a youth, were introduced to him. He had just said what was necessary about his domestic affairs, when the keeper of the jail made his appearance. "You know," said he to Socrates, "what is my commission; and your behaviour convinces me, that you will receive it, not as most others have done, with wrathful looks, and execrations against me. Sure I am not to have your anger or ill will." He retired, scarcely restraining his tears. "This man," said Socrates, "I have found humane and obliging. Let another be called to bring in the poison, since he seems to be affected, and let us not cause him to wait longer for what is to be done." "As yet," said Crito, "the sun's rays are seen upon the mountains: Until they become invisible, we may continue our discourse." "It is folly," said Socrates, "to pretend to turn to any purpose the last wing of time, which is no longer ours." Seeing that he was no more to be diverted, Crito made a sign to a boy that stood by him to go out. Presently came forward *one* with a cup in his hand, and reached it to Socrates. He received it pleasantly, and held it a while in his hand, without change of colour or countenance. Then, with the eager look usual to him, when he put a question, he said to the officer, "Tell me now, whether the potion may admit of a small libation from it?" He was answered, that the infusion was not larger than what was judged necessary. "I understand you," said he; "yet it is allowable, and becoming us, to pray to the gods, that our migration hence may be a happy one. I offer this prayer; and may it be so." He then instantly drank off the poison; manifestly composed in mind and gesture.

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His friends were by this time in apparent agitations of grief. Upon observing it, he said, "We ought to remember why the women were dismissed, and that it was chiefly to avoid any appearances of disquiet. I have always heard, that agreeable and gratulatory accents, and not lamentable tones, were appropriated to the hour of our exit from life." They became silent. He walked, as he was desired, until his limbs failed him, holding now and then some short conversation. He turned to his couch, and lay in an extended posture. As the poisonous juice wrought, his extremities became cold and insensible. Retaining still some power of speech, he said to Crito, "I owe a cock to Æsculapius, let it be paid him, and not forgotten." He replied not to the answer. His body, having only the tremulous remains of motion, was uncovered by the officers, while his eyes expanded in death, were closed by Crito.

Every particular circumstance in the manners, conversation, and deportment of this philosopher, has been made the object of attention; and, where the slightest ground for it appeared, of the strictest criticism. In this, the moderns have not only vied with the ancients, but surpassed them; as if either his defects, or his virtues, deserved more animadversion, or more applause, than those of all the other philosophers. Hence his common oaths, by the *dog*, by the *goat*, by the *plain-tree*, under which he and his companions often sat, have been thought exceptionable, and to require explication. Plato ascribes the use of these interjections in his discourse, to the reverence* he had for the names of the gods; which, in him, says he, was not a human fear, but a perception transcending its greatest impression; and yet his accusers constructed it a mark of his impiety, and gave it a place in his indictment. It is less surprising, therefore, that his last words, in which he desired a cock to be paid to Æsculapius, should have furnished occasion to various glosses, and unfavourable comments. Notwithstanding he is acknowledged to have always observed a decorum with respect to the public religion, and although the particular ceremony recommended by him is explained by several ancient authors in a sense highly moral, he has not been acquitted, but arraigned of giving, with his dying breath, a sanction to that
false

* In Philaebo, vel de summo bono, ad initium.

false and idolatrous theology, which, to his greatest honour, he is understood to have reprobated in his mind. To many, the poison inducing a delirium, has been his apology; and yet it is not generally accounted a satisfactory one, as it goes upon a supposition. Supported, however, upon the greatest probability, a charitable judgment should dispose us to prefer it to an interpretation which constitutes a charge or an invective against him. But, if it should be contended that there was no delirium, and that this concession ought not to be made, the conclusion must be, that, as he did not owe his impeachment or his death to his maintaining, publicly, the belief of one supreme being, but taught it in the way other philosophers did their singular doctrines, with reserve, and under an improper constraint, so it was not, in providence, permitted to him to give, at his death, any more distinct testimony to this truth, or to purer principles of religion, than what, during his life, he had exhibited.

The judgment to be formed about his familiar *daemon*, or *genius*, is, in every view of the question, still more intricate and controvertible. After perusing the various dissertations of Plutarch, Athenaeus, Maximus Tyrius, Apuleius, and others who have touched the subject, we find its obscurity undiminished, and receive no more satisfaction than Timarchus of Cheronea could boast of, after descending into the dark cave of Trephonius's oracle, in order to procure a solution of the mystery of Socrates's *daemon*. If, with Athenaeus, we * should be inclined to pronounce the whole story of the *daemon*, and its presages, a fiction, to be placed to the account, not of Socrates himself, but of his disciples, who might be induced to invent, and insist upon it, as the most popular defence they could make against Anytus's accusation of him for impiety, and that they might more readily fix upon this deception, and excuse it to themselves, when, in the language of philosophy, that intelligent faculty of the soul †, which, by its penetration, discerns the consequences of certain actions, and has, as it were, a prescience of them, was often

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distinguished

* Deipnosophist. lib. 11.
 manus in corpore situs, Deus nuncupatur. Apuleius de Deo Socratis, duod. edit.
 tom. 2. p. 73.

† Nam in quodam significato, animus humanus in corpore situs, Deus nuncupatur. Apuleius de Deo Socratis, duod. edit.

distinguished by the name of the *god, or daemon within the mind*; if these bold asseverations and constructions should be admitted, we must not only renounce, upon this particular point, the authorities of Plato, Xenophon, and what we find reported to the same purpose, upon the faith of other disciples and contemporaries, but go near to subvert all the credit of these authors, in almost every thing they advanced about Socrates's character as a man and philosopher. We might, indeed, on account of such a trespass upon veracity, in a point of fact, throw aside their books, as unworthy to be trusted, even where nothing extraordinary is related of him. At the same time, we must, along with them, condemn the judgments of the most intelligent authors, in subsequent times, and some of these too disposed to dispute a fact, declarative of a phenomenon which they in vain laboured to account for. But Athenaeus's detractive vein, apparent in many of his dissertations, had a particular impulse upon this subject, from his undisguised malevolence to Plato. Finding, as is * observed in Cicero, that such an addition was made to the presages of Socrates's daemon, by the Pythagoreans and Platonists, who espoused the doctrine of guardian gods, or genii, attendant upon men, that Antipater had collected them into a full volume, he takes occasion to make the unquestionable fabrication of the bulk of them rebound upon Plato, and Xenophon, the original narrators of some of them, and equally discredit their testimony, and assertions, as to Socrates having any *admonishing* daemon.

To reconcile to the character of the Athenian sage, or at least to our idea of it, his acknowledgement of having frequent admonitions, prohibitory, indeed, and not impulsive, as Plato † and Xenophon report them, from an intelligent *genius* of a supernatural kind, is the next, and greatest, difficulty to be considered, if not resolved. Of all the ancient authors who have treated the question, Plutarch appears to have made the greatest effort ‡, and, without pretending to be decisive, to have launched beyond the common bounds of his imagination, in order to reach
some

* De Divinatione, lib. 1. p. 273.
pientia.
p. 588. et sequent.

† Plato in Theage, vel de Sapientia.
‡ Plutarch. de deo Socratis. Oper. omn. fol. edit. tom. 2.

some solution of it. But his hesitation less respects the credit of the fact itself, or its compatibility with Socrates's character, than how it might be explained upon some principles of philosophy; and, in the end, he delivers a physiological tale, not worth the stretch of his fancy, or of our rehearsal. Others think it enough to say, that Socrates might as well be permitted, as philosophers and reformers of states before him had done, to feign occasional inspirations from some divinity; and not only so, but they add, that the purity of his mind, the morality of his life, and his laudable intentions, rendered it highly probable that he might really be the object of such extraordinary favour; and, unless all divine communications to men were denied, his participation in them could not be rejected. It is well known, that this last sentiment, which is that of Maximus Tyrius *, has been so far recognised in the Christian world, that Justin Martyr †, Clemens Alexandrinus, Lactantius, and others of the primitive defenders of Christianity, considering Socrates as one of the first lights of the heathen nations, do not scruple to affirm, that his rational, and purer conceptions of the deity, extended among the intelligent, might be rendered, providentially, conducive to the introduction of the Evangelical truths. But it consists not well with this estimate of his virtues, or even with that of the probity of his character as a man, and his wisdom as a philosopher, to suppose him either a pretender to supernatural admonitions, which were not given him, or under the delusions of a fantastic imagination. Between these two extremes, alike repugnant to his character, it must be difficult to choose; but, if we form an hypothesis about the intervention of his daemon, as a reality declared by him, there appears to be a necessity of assuming one of them as a foundation of conjecture; and that we offer is to the following purpose.

In several embarrassing situations, both of a public and private concern, Socrates would often find himself called upon in duty to act his part. His delicacy of sentiment about the morality or propriety of what was to be done, would be apt to throw him into hesitation, and induce

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him

* Dissert. 26. oct. edit. p. 264.

† In Apolog. prim. sect. 5. Lactant. de Origine Error. Clemens Alexandrin. in Stromatis, passim.

him to decline all action or procedure; from which, however, it would be most difficult to excuse himself to others. In this dilemma, a strict moralist as he was, he might think it allowable to use a pretext, and such a one as would best defend him against importunity, by calling the restraint he laid upon himself the *imposed prohibition* of some divinity, which, being announced to him, he could not disobey. If this device, to which a sense of virtue prompted him, was but once tried, it is evident how he would be involved by the declaration necessarily annexed to it, and from which he could not afterwards recede. His daemon, once acknowledged to have given him warning, would be fixed upon him as a close prophetic attendant; and no wish he might have would avail to throw its intercourse with him aside. His friends, conceiving it to exalt his character, would be the first to support the veracity of it, and show an officious zeal in proving, by instances, its unquestionable truth. But it appears, from what we are told, that Socrates did not encourage them in this attestation. On the contrary *, when Simmias desired particular information about the daemon's signals, he declined answering his questions in such a manner, that his other friends ceased altogether from their inquiries. Yet, after his death, many of them took the liberty to comment upon the motions and presages of the daemon as they pleased; until, with other adventitious help, they were swelled into a multiplicity of absurd and ridiculous predictions.

One immediate effect of Socrates's condemnation and death was, to create terror to his philosophic companions, and to make them fly from Athens, now beheld as hostile to genius and science, and instead of protection and favour, punishing their most signal appearances with imprisonment, and the hemlock. Elis, of which Phaedo was a native, Megara, where Euclid resided, Eretria, the chief town in the island of Eubaea, and that of Ægina, whither Aristippus had retired, were the chief places of their retreat; and in several of which schools of philosophy were opened, and the small, and short lived, sects, called the *Eliac*, the *Eretriac*, and the most considerable of them the *Megarie*, took their rise. But of these, with exception of the last, it will not be requisite to make particular mention.

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* Plutarch, *ibid.* et Apul.

In the mean time, the people of Athens, who had suffered the proceedings against their eminent philosopher to pass with little apparent concern, began to reflect upon his death, by a public sentence, as a matter in which their reputation was concerned. Often more sensible to fame than to virtue, and exemplifying, by quick and contrary passions, the vivacity, more than the rectitude or propriety, of their sentiments, Socrates's name and memory seemed to recur upon their minds, with apprehension of merited reproach for their unworthy treatment of him. Some circumstances concurred to sharpen the sting. Several strangers who came to Athens, from curiosity to visit him, or to be under his instructions, were struck, and much affected, with the account of his being judicially condemned; and, among them, a Spartan youth, having learned, at the city gate, that he *was no more*, would advance no further: But, being informed where his tomb was, he went and laid himself down upon it, as in a transport of grief, and passed the night. In the morning, he affectionately kissed the dust; and, without entering Athens, returned on his way to the Peloponnesus *. Antisthenes, afterwards the founder of the Cynic sect, being asked what was to be done with some young men of Pontus, who inquired for Socrates; "Why not," said he, "carry them to Anytus, who, doubtless, is wiser than ever *your Socrates* was." Roused by these challenges of their insensibility to the merit, and shameful doom, of their philosopher †, the citizens broke forth into rage; and Anytus, to escape their fury, fled to Heraclea, and there found no protection. Melitus was put to death; and his other adversaries, or those who bore witness against him, universally abhorred, ended their lives in exile, and in a miserable manner. The judgment against Socrates was erased from the public records; and his statue, moulded in brass by Lysippus, was erected in the place called *Pompeium*. His friends were entreated to return to the city, that the Athenians, if possible, might forget the unhappy cause of their retreat; and which they, more than all others, had reason to deplore. He was born in the fourth year of the 77th Olympiad, and was seventy years old

* Diogen. Laert. in Vita Antisthen.
Themistitii Orat. 2.

† Plutarch. de Invidia et Odio

old at his death, which ensued upon the first of the 95th of that epoch *.

From the signal ardour for excellence in philosophic study which appeared to be diffused throughout Greece about the time of Socrates's exit, it seemed as if the Grecian genius had collected fresh vigour from his dialectic manner of reasoning. In imitation of it, almost every literary work was composed in the disquisitive stile of the dialogue; and, unless in physical or mathematical subjects, the formal dissertation, or close connected treatise, was generally rejected. The natural taste of the Greeks prompted the usage, and displayed all the lustre of that composition; while only some rhetorical performances were deemed to compete with it in fame. The dialectic freedom which Socrates had used, and allowed to his disciples, being alledged to authorise the philosophic doubt in every question, was soon extended to a latitude of scepticism which that philosopher never approved, but endeavoured to expose in the ridiculous characters and foolish disputations of the Sophists. In a short time, no fewer than eight or nine separate sects arose, distinguished from one another by particular tenets, and almost all of them pretending to be *Socratics*, or at least to correspond either in their modes of philosophising, or in some points of doctrine, with the Athenian sage. Not that we are to understand what Cicero says upon this head in the extensive sense in which it may be taken †, as if Socrates's dialect had introduced controversial arguments upon the general principles of science, or moral truth and falsehood, unattempted before, or unmaintained in the Grecian schools. It would be a gross contradiction to the account given of the Acataleptics, and of the rise of the *Eristic* sect, to form this imagination. All that is intelligible from the passage in Cicero, can amount to no more than this; that, from a misapprehension, or wilful mistake of Socrates's disquisitive ratiocination upon every question,

* Plato in Apolog.

† Nam cum essent plures orti fere a Socrate, (quod ex illius variis, et diversis, et in omnem partem diffusis disputationibus alius aliud apprehenderat) profeminatae sunt quasi familiae, dissentientes inter se, et multum disjunctae, et dispares. cum tamen omnes se philosophos Socraticos et dici vellent, et esse arbitrarentur. De Oratore, lib. 3 fol. edit. pag. 186.

question, an unbounded license of disputation was taken by the students of philosophy, who soon were seen divided into a variety of sects, holding different, or opposite opinions to one another; and yet all of them claimed to be of the Socratic school. But this extravagance of the Grecian genius was not a new phenomenon. It had been already exhibited in most striking instances. So inseparable from it was the love of novelty, the passion to excel in dispute, and to broach some singular doctrine in philosophy, that it is hardly to be doubted but that these, its concomitants, would have been displayed in any tract of science that chanced to be opened. Whether Socrates had proved such an instructor in the dialect or not, evident it is, that several of the founders of the new sects only borrowed some of his topics, as a colour to the tenets most favoured by them, and which they meant to make the distinguishing principles of their philosophy *. Thus, to Antisthenes, it was enough that Socrates held forth restraint of the appetites, patience, a measure of hard discipline, and a degree of independence on external things, as requisites of virtue, to derive from this doctrine the indecent, harsh, rugged, and disdainful, maxims of the Cynic tribe; while Aristippus laid hold of a different topic. The sentiments delivered by Socrates on the pleasures of friendship, and love of the moral beauties of the soul and mind, served the Cyrenaic philosopher as a ground upon which he reared up his system of virtue founded on voluptuous sensations. But as, in Socrates's personal fate, it was testified, that no man's wisdom or virtue is sufficient to overcome the prejudices, or correct the depravities, generally found in human minds; so, in the wilful misapplication of his doctrines by the more rational and intelligent, it appeared, that it was not enough to have a faculty, as Plato says †, divinely given him, similar to the *obstetrician* art of his mother, to awake and bring forth truths dormant in souls lodged in corporeal obscurity, unless he had joined with it a preservative against the corruption and abuse of these truths when set in the fairest light, and acknowledged by those he instructed. But they, under no persuasion, and laid under no obligation to the contrary, soon reputed themselves amongst the enlightened
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* Ibid.

† In Theaeteto, ad finem.

as well as he; and who might take such liberty as they chose in the annunciation of these discoveries, which were not said to be extrinsically communicated, but only recalled to the view of their minds: And hence the disciple we have mentioned concludes, that the rational faculty, although an instrument of knowledge, is not wisdom itself, or science properly so called, and which is placed, not in recollection only, that is still changeable, but in intuitive and invariable impressions of truth, the privilege of intellect, ever conjoined with what is supernatural, and the divine, and therefore the only true and perfect, illumination of the human mind.

S E C T.

SECTION III.

Of the Megaric School.—Of Sophisms.—Of the Philosophy of Aristippus, and the Cyrenaic School.—Of the Cynic Sect.

IN what credit the art of disputation was held in the schools of Greece, appeared by the celebrity of one founded by Euclid of Megara, a town near the Isthmus of Corinth, which he called by the simple name of the *Megaric School*, but to which that of the *Eristic*, or *litigious*, was soon alledged to be more applicable. There were, however, original authors *, of greater name than himself, whose books initiated him in the dialectic subtleties; and he owed to the gleanings of them from the writings of Parmenides, and Zeno Eleates, the cultivation of his genius, for the display he made of it in all logical controversy. With this preparation, he became a hearer of Socrates; and the condition into which he was thrown, during the course of his attendance upon him, has been remarked, to the equal praise of the master and disciple †, by various authors. The Athenians, having a quarrel with the citizens of Megara, carried their resentment to such a height, as to pronounce it, by a public decree, a capital offence in any of that community to enter their city or territory. Euclid forbore, for a while, his visits to Athens; but, weighing the danger against the loss he thought he sustained, he resolved, rather than be excluded from the pleasure and benefit he received from

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conversation

* Diog. Laert. lib. 2. quart. edit. p. 141.
cap. 18. Thucydides, lib. 1. parag. 9.

† Aulus Gellius, lib. 6.

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conversation with Socrates, to run the worst chance that might happen to him. He walked the distance of twenty miles, entered Athens at evening, disguised in a female habit, conversed with Socrates, who deferred his hours of repose, and, at day break, returned back on his way to Megara. This hazardous resort was continued by Euclid for a considerable time; so much did his desire of improvement surmount apprehensions about his personal safety. But, whatever entertainment or advantage he derived from these interviews, it appears that Socrates soon discovered the bent of his genius, and that it was chiefly turned to the superficial and illusive parts of science. "You understand," said he to him, "how to hold an argument with Sophists, but not with men." Even his moral theses were of the enigmatic stamp, and required explanation before they could be understood in any proper sense. He affirmed, that there was but one good *, celebrated under several names, and called *prudence*, *god*, and *mind*, and by other like epithets; and that to it there were no opposites; and that such things had no being. He made it a rule to admit arguments, not by assumption, but by inference, and discarded altogether the dispute by similitude. "Every such disputation," said he, "insists upon things as either being like to others, or unlike: If the former be the subject, why not rather consider the things themselves to which they are like? if the latter, any comparison of them is insignificant." Yet, with all his improvements in the forms of the dialect, it required the succession of several of his élèves to complete the spurious and motley breed of them. He lived, however, in much esteem, and in a condition of wealth that enabled him to entertain a number of the refugees from Athens upon Socrates's condemnation. From him the distressed friends met not only with that hospitality which the ancients regarded as a sacred duty, but with that affection inspired by cordial participation in the same afflicting sentiment; and where the entertainer and the guests were alike disposed to make the reflections of philosophy the seasoning of their repasts.

Eubulides, Alexinus, and Stilpo, the disciples of the Megaric school, had each his share of reputation; but the first of them was reckoned
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* Diogenes Laert. *ibid.*

most to excel in what was deemed the shining part of their skill in disputation, and to entitle it to the name of science. He collected, under certain heads, and reduced into form *, the yet promiscuous, and undistinguished, swarm of the sophisms, and added to them by inventions of his own. He not only showed his art in turning sentences, consisting of proper and definite words, into fallacies that did not obscure their meaning, but tended to perplex the common judgments and conclusions of reason with respect to intelligible propositions themselves, but he also brought them forth † under the distinct appellations of the occult and the falsifying argument, and of the electra, the veiled, the horned, and the bald, and the unmeasurable heap of the Sorites. In this fabrication the sophisms became polished weapons, and armour both for attack and defence, not only in the dialect of the schools, but in the *forensic* pleadings and disputes ‡. For how, said they, could the *παραδομισιον*, or falsifying argument be discussed or reconciled to the axiom of the dialect reasoning itself, that every announced proposition is either true or false. But, if you say “you lie, when you speak truth, you lie; but you say you lie, and say what is true, therefore you lie §. Take an example from a question in the civil law. You engage to instruct one in rhetoric, as Protagoras did Eyalthus, and you receive in hand half the sum of money agreed upon for payment, but the other he retains until he comes to plead at the bar, and first carries a cause. He defers the essay of his abilities, and no request or sollicitation used by you can bring him to an exhibition of them. You threaten him with a judicial prosecution, and announce to him what, incontestibly, must be the issue of the question: For, say you, prevail in it I must, whether a sentence pass in my favour or against me; if the first be obtained, your obligation to pay is manifest; and, if the other, the conditional agreement is fulfilled; you have pleaded and gained your cause; and, therefore, you are no less clearly subjected to the debt, and the required payment.”

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* Diogen Laert. *ibid.*

† Atque habebam molestos vobis, sed minutos, Stilponem, Diodorum, Alexinum, quorum sunt contorta et aculeata quaedam sophismata, sic enim appellantur fallaces conclusiunculae. Cicero Acad. Quæst. lib. 4. p. 25.

‡ Cicer. *ibid.* pag. 29.

§ Aulus

Gell. lib. 4. cap. 10.

"It is well," replies he, "but, notwithstanding your irrefragable argument, I accept its alternative. For, if judgment be given for me, I am acquitted, if against me, I have lost my first cause, and, consequently, can owe you nothing." The dilemma, it is said, could not be solved by the judges, and the cause remained in suspense, without meeting a decision.

It is apparent how much the progress of real science must have been retarded, when such shreds of ratiocination and sophistical ambiguities, instead of being only sported with by the *Tyros* in the dialectic, actually engrossed the chief attention and study of the philosophers themselves. Zeno's *Eristics* appeared to be adopted by them as the quintessence of human wit, and his arguments against motion to have invincible force, and merit the highest admiration. "It cannot be," said Diodorus Cronos, "that any thing is moved *." For either it moves in the place where it is, or in that where it is not; but it cannot be conceived to move, but to rest in the place where *it is*; nor is it moved where *it is not*; as nothing can act or suffer but where it is found." It is added, that the philosopher having dislocated his shoulder bone, applied to Erophilus, an anatomist, to have it reduced, "Hold by your argument," replied Erophilus, "and there cannot possibly be a dislocation." He was entreated to defer the dispute to another time. The taste for captious argument, and illusive disputation, is said to have spread from the desks of the philosophers to the public halls of Megara, and infected the citizens amidst their commerce in the forum, and their discourses in their houses. Every place resounded with a jargon that imitated the dialectic controversies; so that the people accosted one another, on every occasion, with the air and language of disputants ready to engage in any argument. This phrensy, which exposed the profession of philosophy, made Stilpo consider how the source of it might be abated, if not restrained, in the schools. The experiment, however, was
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* Sextus Empiricus. *Hypotypos*, lib. 2. cap. 22; et *adversus mathematicos*, lib. 9. pag. 396 His inference from this argument was, that, nothing being moved, nothing could perish: And so, said the wits, we may reason thus: Since no animal dies in the time when it lives, nor in that when it lives not, it never dies; and, therefore, we are all immortal.

of a dangerous kind; and, like the pruning of a tree, it might cause new shoots to spring forth in greater number than the luxuriant branches. He pretended to hold the assertion, that nothing was to be predicated of, or to be in a subject, even as an accident to it, but what was the same, or of a like nature, with the subject itself *. Thus, it was incompetent to be predicated of man, that he was good or bad, or of a horse that he was a runner; for these predicates were quite detached from the definition of the creature man, or horse, and no more particularly connected with it than with many other different things. He endeavoured also to remove from the field of logical controversy the annunciation of terms, denoting species of beings †, by affirming them to be vague, and undescriptive of any thing; for to speak of man, or tree, without meaning this man or that tree, was equivalent to saying, that it was a something, not here, or there, but any where to be found." If his intention was, as is alledged, to cut off many sophistical and frivolous arguments, it is plain that he administered, at the same time, some fresh fuel for contention; so that the remedy might prove, in the issue, no better than the disease.

But if Stilpo, from desire of fame, did not despise the laurels to be acquired from eminence in subtile controversy, he appears, in other respects, to have bore a character worthy of a true philosopher. He placed the felicity of life in a mind not subject to passion. He had given way, for a time ‡, to some habits of intemperance; but his renunciation of them, and the virtuous change of his manners, was so complete, that none could recollect his former depravities, without observing how remarkably he had demonstrated his victory over them. He owned, that the love of fame was that passion which stuck closest to him, and would be the last he could lay aside. In his professional line, he experienced an ample gratification of this passion, and in an extent beyond what any
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* Plutarch. adversus Colotem.

† Diogen. Laert. ibid.

‡ Stilponem, Megaricum philosophum, acutum sane hominem, et probatum illis temporibus accepimus.—Vitiosam etiam naturam, ab eo sic edomitam, et compresam esse doctrina, ut nemo unquam vinolentum illum, nemo in eo libidinis vestigium viderit. Cicero, de Fato.

of the Megaric school could boast. He drew around him disciples*, and hearers, from almost every sect and school; and several men of eminent rank, as well as students of philosophy, afterwards famous, might be numbered among them. It was said that all Greece had an attraction to Megara. When he came to Athens, the citizens quitted their shops and employments to be entertained with the specimens of his elocution. It was much to the honour of his eloquence, that Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, to whom he addressed an oration on the subject of humanity and benevolence, was so captivated with it as to become his constant hearer. That prince, upon the taking of Megara by his troops, desired that a particular inventory should be presented to him by Stilpo, of what goods he had lost by the plunder of the soldiers. "They have taken nothing from me," said he, "nor can I be robbed, while I am left in possession of the discipline of philosophy, and other qualifications attending upon it." Although cautious, and rather reserved in conversation, and yet, naturally, no dissembler, a few words that slipped from him at Athens about Minerva's statue, occasioned his being summoned before the Areopagites. He had asked some silly person he met with in his walk, Whether *she*, the daughter of Jupiter, was a god? Yes, surely, replied the man. "But," added he, "this statue we see is Phidias's work, and not Jove's production;" to which an assent was given. "*She* is then," said he, "no god." Appearing before the court, he neither denied nor retracted what he had said, but maintained it to be true, that *she* was not a *god*, but a *goddess*. He found, however, that the Areopagites would not understand this *dialectic* defence; but, considering it as evasive, he was ordered to depart the city. He joined to singular acuteness in argument a surprising facility and happiness in his elocution. Civilized, decent, and ingratiating in his manners, he showed himself also to be disinterested. He lived to a great age; and is said, when he found his exit approaching, to have hastened it by a draught of wine.

It is to be observed, that, to introduce the account of Stilpo, a stretch is made over several of the professors of the dialect in the Megaric school who

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

who preceded him in time; such as Alexinus, Euphanetus, Apollonius Cronus, and Diodorus, also called Cronos, who was Stilpo's contemporary; with this unhappy memorial of it for him, that being, in the presence of Ptolemy Soter, unable to resolve some examples of the dialectic given by that philosopher, he was upbraided with his stupidity by the King; a reproach felt so severely by him, that it occasioned a grief of which he died. Unfortunate even his surname of Cronos proved to him, as being liable, by the removal of only the two first letters, to Laertius's epigram *, which left for his proper title that of *κρονος*, an *ass*. Yet, it may be questioned, whether he merited it more than some others of his dialectical brethren, who laboured with him, but without agreement, to reduce, under some general rule, or rules, the truth or falsity of what was called the *Connex* proposition, which was always introduced with the conditional adverb *if*; as in the example, "If it is day, it is light." But, in case the antecedent did not involve the consequent, so that one could say, syllogistically, and conclude truly, and universally, but it is day, *therefore it is light*; the question was, with respect to any such proposition, by what *criterion*, or rule of judgment, a true or unexceptionable *connex* could be ascertained †. It was generally allowed, that it was *asynaclic*, or not truly conclusive, in the several ways of incoherence, omission, being faulty in its form, and having redundance, or superfluity. Incoherent, when the assumptions have no coherence with one another, nor with the conclusion; as if we should say, "If it is day, it is light; but grain is sold in the market, therefore Dion walks;" omiffive, when something is left out which the propriety of the conclusion requires: For, allowing this argumentation to be true, "riches are either good, or ill, or indifferent; but they are neither ill nor indifferent, therefore they are good;" but there is an omission which vitiates the inference, if it be only said, "riches are either good or ill; but they are not ill, and therefore good." Faulty in form, or when under a loose and undetermined figure of the syllogism; redundant, if unnecessary assumptions were introduced, which could not well be carried on to

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*
lib. 2. cap. 13. p. 81.—82.

† Sextus Empiricus. In Pyrrh. hypotyp.

to the conclusion. Yet all this was of little significance to determine the judgment of a right *connex*; about which a constant dispute was maintained, and Diodorus, Chrysippus, Philo, and other dialecticians, strenuously contended with one another *. We shall dispense with the recital of their *dijudicative* reasons of difference, as Sextus Empiricus has stated them, and only observe, with Cicero, what ground was afforded, from their variance, to the Academics to suspend their assent to the probable truth of certain propositions, and to the Sceptics to insist, that there was neither sufficient nor probable proof to be given of any position held to be indubitably true.

We conclude what is necessary to be said upon the part of the Dialectic respecting Sophisms, with observing, from what Sextus Empiricus delivers † upon this article, that the Sceptics chose to shift the solution of them upon the pretext, that the task belonged not to them, but to those who held forth the dialectic study to be a science which discovered what was true, and what false, and what neutral. "It is enough," says he, "for us to show that it cannot be such. But, as to the attention to be paid to Sophisms, we are not obliged always to enter into a logical discussion of them. They are marked to us as pieces of false reasoning, with only some similitude to truth; and, therefore, no assent is due to them, even although we cannot point out, or understand, where the fallacy lies. The tricks of jugglers we know to be impositions, without being able to conceive by what artifice they are performed; and so we may judge of captious and illusive syllogisms. Notwithstanding these allegations, it is by no means evident how a professed and universal sceptic can consistently hold a conclusive proposition to be false, without saying why, and in what way it is to be so judged; and of all reasoners he is the least entitled to object to futility in argument, and to acquit himself from an answer, by alledging, that there is in it some inexplicable ambiguity; when although, if he should not directly maintain, that

* In hoc ipso, quod in elementis dialectici docent, quomodo judicare oporteat, verum falsumne sit, si quid ita *connexum* est ut hoc; *si dies est, lucet*, quanta contentio est? Aliter, Diodoro, aliter Philoni, Chrysippo aliter placet. Acad. Quaest. ibid. lib. 4.

† Hypotypos, lib. 2. cap. 22. p. 100. et sequens.

that contradictory propositions may be true, yet he approaches as near as he can to this subversion of all principles of reason. With respect to every axiom, or clearest dictate of the human mind, his main consideration is, how, by some perverse conception, it may be cast into an ideal intricacy, as ambiguous and unintelligible as the most veiled sophism can be reckoned. His paradoxes, therefore, are no more to be regarded than the dialectic falsifications; and if, of them, the great oracle * of the sceptical ambiguities could say, we see, before us, the precipice which would throw us into absurdities, and are under no necessity to hold our course by it; and, therefore, we turn from it into another path. With equal reason, surely, and with more propriety, may the rational dogmatists say, we seek truth as a reality in nature, and have in some cases demonstrative proof, and in others sufficient evidence, of the discoveries of it, but we are not obliged to trace it through all the oblique and delusive perspectives that may be presented of it by professed doubters of the plainest conclusions of reason itself: We are fully satisfied that these are studied and artificial deceptions, which, without a fruitless labour to explain them, may well be rejected as the counterfits of reason, and the extravagant fallies of the human imagination."

Amongst the more celebrated sects, the Stoics, as will afterwards appear, were those who made the most use of the dialectic subtilities. Chrysippus, indeed, may be reckoned a second founder of them, by his prolific invention, and his endeavours to diffuse them through every branch of philosophy. Much of his reputation he owed to his dexterous management of the sophisms, yet he sometimes called them, with a sneer, his *gins* for catching men. They have still some rehearsal in the schools, to prove the ready conception, if not the depth, of the student of logics.

Aristippus has been mentioned amongst the disciples of Socrates; and to him, according to Xenophon, was addressed, by that philosopher, the moral fable of the *Judgment of Hercules* upon Virtue and Pleasure. It was evidently intended as a corrective to that false taste for the indulgence of the sensual appetites and passions, which the African youth

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constantly

* Ibid.

constantly discovered. The education he had received was nothing more than a nursery of all his desires; and so indelible were its impressions, that he was soon observed to relish none of Socrates's discourses * but those on *love* and *lovers*, and *desireable good*. He studied only how the sentiments of the Athenian moralist, upon these subjects, might be so interpreted as to give a colour to his theory of human life, and the conduct suitable to it. Philosophy, said Aristo of Chios †, must be hurtful, when its principles are either mistaken, or industriously perverted. Aristippus had ingenuity enough to discover, that, if he could put the affections and passions of the human mind, and these especially that were immediately produced, upon an equal footing with reflection, rational judgment, and other internal sentiments, it would be a great step to the proof of his favourite theory; which aimed at vindicating, by plausible arguments, the life of a *voluptuary*, to which he was naturally inclined.

Those, says Aristotle, in the beginning of his Ethics, who place the chief good of man in bodily pleasure, have little or no concern with the science of *morals*. Their theory relates much more to *passion* than to action, and considers not what is good in itself, but what is felt as a pleasant or painful sensation. Hence Aristippus asserted, that every thing was, to every man, either positive pleasure or pain, good or evil, according as it might be ‡, in the instant of time, felt by him; and that it concerned him not to use his reason or judgment about the past or future effect of any object, further than to consider how, if it excited a smooth motion, in which pleasure consisted, it might be continued, or, if a harsh one, which occasioned grief, it might be avoided. Thus were men required to *know no more, and to do no more, in life*, than what mere infants do, and less than what many of the animals below them perform, which act not always according to their immediate sensations of pleasure or pain, but often, in opposition to them, undertake what is troublesome, and endure uneasiness in consequence of their instincts for self-preservation, or for the care of their kind; and even, in some instances, with efforts bordering on reason, for improving their condition.

* Cicero de Orat. lib. 3. p. 186. Diogen. Laert. in Vita, lib. 2.
de Natur. Deor. lib. 3. p. 251.

† Cicero
‡ Diogen. Laert. ibid.

tion *. It is a false assertion, therefore, *that all animals seek only their particular pleasure*, and, governed by what presently affects them, prefer not one species of it to another. Undirected by reason, instinct leads them to make a distinction, and to pursue that which is placed at a distance from them, and is attainable only by a course of inquietude, rather than follow their present and more easy gratifications. Man, in his rudest state, without having the sense of any moral duty, or obligation upon him, is impelled by natural feelings, which he cannot resist, to act in a similar manner; and, in many cases, to neglect an immediate affection, for the sake of complying with a more remote one, and to forego a private pleasure on account of another of a social, or communicative kind. When reason exerts itself, and reciprocal offices have enforced the exercise of these affections, they come to be recognised as duties, and are mutually claimed under this idea. Necessity and utility conspire to urge its propriety, and to maintain the just impression.

In opposition to this process of Nature, it was Aristippus's doctrine, that men had nothing else to direct their sentiments of any thing, but what he called the *internal touch*, or the first simple *affection* imparted by it to the mind. Of whatever kind this might be, whether agreeable or disagreeable, or in whatever form perceived, it was to be held †, during the time it continued, for all that was truly known of the object. The senses, said he, in many instances deceive us, and, therefore, their report cannot be trusted; and what causes a particular affection is often obscure or unknown. What, then, is comprehensible to us in any object; or what other mode of judgment is left us with respect to it? Is it not to be concluded, that every man's immediate feeling is the only real one; and that no farther than his perception goes can he be supposed to have any understanding about it? In this manner did the Cyreniac philosopher endeavour, by a most futile argument ‡, to discard every act of the rational faculty in man, and to substitute in its room blind and variable affection; so that any one who, with jaundiced eyes, saw all

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* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*† Sextus Empiricus *Advers. Mathem. lib. 7.*p. 173 —4. Cicero *Academ. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 25*‡ *Ibid. p. 37.**Quoniam Aristippus, quasi nullum animum habemus, corpus solum tuetur.*

objects yellow, or, with distorted ones, beheld two suns, or, with a disordered *sensorium*, like Orestes's, perceived two Thebes on fire, was to be concluded to form a truer judgment of the appearance of objects before him, than he who, under an infirmity of his corporeal senses, had learned from experience that their report was then to be called in question, and the impression received by them regarded not as the true one, and such as it ought to be, but as delusive and fallacious. Common observation, or ordinary accidents, suffice to make it generally known, that a disturbed organ, as the eye compressed, or the medium of vision changed, as in the aspect of things in water, will cause a different perception; and hence none infer, that every sensation we have of objects is the true judgment of them, if we except the unsound and distracted in mind. So far from confounding the things seen with our perceptions, we are almost instinctively taught to make trial of the veracity of the latter; and, in certain cases, we learn to use methods and contrivances for correcting their errors, and adjusting them to the appearances of things.

This theory of sensations and affections was intended to support one of a like sceptical kind in *morals*; the science of which Aristippus pronounced to be the only one deserving attention and study. But no more motely and incoherent system of them than he formed to himself could be easily imagined. Upon any natural propensities to one kind of action more than another, unless, as it might be productive of pleasure, it could not be founded; and, although he supposed reason might interfere, and give some direction, yet his theory afforded no *data* upon which it could proceed. If the report of the corporeal senses was not to be relied upon, and the only test of what was true, and what was pleasant or good, was referable to the immediate *touch* felt by the mind; how was it possible to connect one experience of this sort with another, so as to admit any fixed rule of judgment, either about the efficacy of an object, or the tendency of a special action, to produce pleasure or pain? In the alledged variation and fallacy of the senses, in the diversified situations in which the mind might receive a contrary impression from the same object, there could be no conclusion of reason with respect to what was eligible, or not so; since what appeared an object of choice in one instant

instant of time, might be reprobated in the next, and the mind be left as much at a loss to determine which affection it ought to prefer, as if it had received no *touch* whatsoever.

In broaching this singular doctrine, it appears that Aristippus consulted more his own particular genius, than reflected attentively on the principles by which human nature is governed. With a versatility of mind, not easily to be conceived, he could, like an accomplished player, personate the most opposite characters, assume, with equal propriety, the plain cloke of the philosopher, or the courtier's pompous robe, and show himself either the moralist or the libertine, the sage or the buffoon, as most suited the turn of his humour or his circumstances *. In these various attitudes, as Horace observes, he never appeared to counterfit his part, but to display a character natural to him, or that became him. It may be here asked, How he could reconcile a demeanor so variable with his philosophic principle about the first *touch* of the mind, which was, above all others, to be credited and acted upon †? Did he feel himself no otherwise affected in the moment when the tyrant Dionysius *spit in his face*, than when, upon repressing his sense of the indignity, from prudence, he said to his friends, who were surprised at his apparent composure, "*If fishermen can endure to be all over wet, for the sake of catching a gudgeon, why should I be disturbed with Dionysius's spittle, when my purpose is to take hold of a fish ‡?*" It is hardly credible of any man, but that his immediate sensation, in such a predicament, would be a disagreeable one, and move his indignation, and that subsequent reflection only could render it an incident of indifference to him. Aristippus, who, although not resentful or passionate, had much vivacity of temper,

* Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res. Epist. 17. lib. 1.

And again, the same poet acknowledges, that, when he could not keep pace with the moral maxims of the more rigid sects, he slipped, as it were by stealth, into Aristippus's easier rules.

Nunc in Aristippi *furtim* praecepta relabor,

Et mihi res, non me rebus, subjungere conor. Epist. 1. lib. 1.

† Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

‡ The Greek word here used signified both a fish and a tyrant.

temper, could be less supposed, than many others, to want the ordinary sensibility upon such occasions. He must therefore be concluded to have been the greatest dissembler of his natural feelings, as he was put, at the court of Dionysius, to frequent trials of them, in a way similar to what has been mentioned. But it is plain, that all the efforts he made as a philosopher, was to appear unaffected by any unpleasant occurrence, and to divert any judgment, by others, of what he felt, by some quaint or facetious repartee; the faculty of which, it must be owned, that he possessed in a most remarkable degree; so that, although he might have imitators, few or none could equal him in it. A friend of his * becoming obnoxious to the Sicilian despot, he first interceded for him, but was not regarded. He then prostrated himself before the king, and obtained his request. What a mean action, and unworthy of a philosopher, is this that you have done? said some of his censorious acquaintance. "The fault," replied he, "lies not upon me. Dionysius is answerable for it; who wears, it seems, what ears he hath in his feet, and not where, naturally, they should be found."

It seems evident that we have not, in Diogenes Laertius's summary of Aristippus's doctrine, nor in that given of it by Sextus Empiricus and Plutarch †, such an exact account of his tenets as to enable us to distinguish them from the variations and additions that are allowed to have been made to them by his disciples, and successors in the Cyrenaic school. From his habits of dissipation, it is to be presumed, that he did not bestow much of his time or attention in digesting his principles, and that he contented himself with giving them the shew of consistency. We find, indeed, in Laertius ‡, the titles of various literary works, which, upon the report of Sotion, and Panaetius, were ascribed to him; yet many of the learned were of Socrates's opinion, that he had committed little or nothing to writing. It may be understood, upon the supposition of some detached pieces being composed by him, how there ensued such a transmission of the general principles of his philosophy as has been stated. He had educated his daughter, Arete, in the most careful manner;

* Diog. Laert. 4to edit. pag. 125.

† Adversus Colotem.

‡ Pag. 128.

ner; as she discovered a singular genius for philosophic study, she took the same pains with her son, the young Aristippus, who was therefore called *Metrodidas*; and Antipater of Cyrene, a most eminent disciple of the school, co-operated with them both in every study, and labour, to unfold and explain what was termed the *Hedonic* system, or that which held forth pleasure, both as the *means* of happiness, and the *end* for which life was desired *. It admitted virtue to be a laudable principle in life, so far as it might be considered as a *selection* of agreeable sensations; but pleasure was pronounced not to differ from pleasure, and the desire of it to be resolved more generally into that of the body than that of the mind. In some cases it was allowed, that joy arose from affections that were not corporeal; as when men exult in the prosperity of their country, or some unexpected piece of good fortune to themselves. It was added, that it was the part of a wise man to be disengaged from envy, immoderate desire, and superstition, which spring from vain opinions, although he could not be unaffected with fear and grief, which are accidents to nature.

But, it is a circumstance to be particularly remarked in this first sketch of the *Hedonic* theory, that, notwithstanding its general principles were, in a great measure, assumed by Epicurus, yet a manifest contrariety of opinion, in several important points †, could not, it seems, be avoided by these eminent retailers of the same system. The disagreement was so palpable, as to bring into controversy, and serve to expose the fallacy of the arguments used by them both. This may be afterwards more distinctly pointed out. Yet here, it may be proper to observe the difference of the two congenial sects, upon the article of felicity or beatitude. We seek particular pleasure, and not general, as an *end*, said Aristippus; and felicity is no more than the sum of all the several sensations of it, from time to time, experienced by us. Any thing beyond these

* Cicero de Officiis, lib. 3. pag. 404. Diogenes Laert. pag. 131.

† Atqui ab Aristippo, Cyrenaici, atque Annicerii philosophi nominati, omne bonum in voluptate posuerunt; virtutemque ob eam rem esse laudandam, quod efficiens esset voluptatis. Quibus obsoletis floret Epicurus; ejusdem fere adjutor, autorque sententiae. Cicero, ibid.

these it cannot be accounted; since pleasure consists in the *touch* that is present, without being connected with that which went before, or may follow after. Its parts are separate points that are not to be drawn into a line; and, therefore, they can mark no constant state. "They have consistency," said Epicurus, "and supreme felicity is placed in the absence of all pain and perturbation, or in the settled tranquility of body and mind *." What state of felicity is that, replied the Cyrenaics, in which there can be no sense of pleasure, as there is no motion excited? It must be either a state of insensibility, or that of a dull and languid suspense between pleasure and pain. "There is in it †," answered Epicurus, "beside a removal of turbulent emotions, the agreeable recollection of past pleasures, and the chearful hope of those in futurity." The internal motion, said the Cyrenaics again, being, in respect of the former, dissolved, and as to the other not completed, neither of them was to be regarded in the account of the actual sensations of pleasures. "Admitting," replied Epicurus, "that the pleasures and the pains of the body were only felt from one instant of time to another, or while they endure, and, therefore, are not to be reckoned connectedly; yet those of the mind are more impressible, have a closer, and almost inseparable connection with each other, and more readily and forcibly recur to the imagination and memory than the corporeal ones. Hence men are generally known, in the course of life, either to rejoice, or to grieve, far more according to the impressions made on their minds by the hope of good, or the fear of evil, than by any actual sensations they have of bodily pleasure or pain; and, therefore, it is that moral philosophy, which teaches the proper discipline of the mind, with respect to its hopes and fears, becomes so important an object of study."

Having explained so particularly the tenets of Aristippus, and the arguments used by him and his followers in maintaining them, we shall not protract the narrative, by insisting on the doctrines of Hegesias, Anniceris, and Theodorus; who commented on the general principles of their sect; and, ambiguous as they were, and easily susceptible of various

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* Cicero de Finibus, lib. 2. pag. 56. et sequent.

† Cicer. Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 3. pag. 253. Diogen. Laert. lib. 10. ad fin.

ous glosses, introduced upon them a confusion of opinions, most of them extravagant, and grossly immoral *. They generally agreed in denying any natural distinctions between virtue and vice, and ascribed them to the influence of civil law or custom. Man, said one party, when considered as standing alone; and by himself, can have no propensities, and much less obligations, to moral offices. But, as it may be difficult, or disagreeable to him, said another, to remain in a solitary state, and he may engage in that which is social or civil, he must be concluded, when placed in that condition, to be laid under the obligation to perform certain duties. If these be attended with labour, said a third, and such inconveniencies as are inconsistent with the *prudential composure* of the wise man, they are not incumbent upon him †. Although the tenet, that life or death was in every man's option, was commonly held amongst them, yet Hegecias, not contented with this assertion, took occasion, from a person's being recovered from the point of death, by the care of his friends, to declaim, and to write, upon the absurdity of such interposition; since death, in many respects, was preferable to life. He was called *Peithithanatos*, or *death's advocate*; but, as some of his auditors in Cyrene began to despatch themselves, he was interdicted by Ptolemy Philadelphus from such exercise of his rhetoric. Theodorus, publishing his *atheism*, was banished, first from Cyrene, and then from Athens ‡. In general, these retainers to Aristippus's school, from their perverse and contradictory opinions, contributed to its discredit; so that, instead of being regarded as a nursery of philosophers, it was rather considered by most of the other sects as productive chiefly of a tribe of *sensualists*, who endeavoured to reduce all the philosophy of human life to vague perceptions of pleasure, without distinguishing its sources, or weighing the degrees and stability of one kind with those of another; and, upon the pretence that there was no other dictate about the end of life, but the desire of pleasure, to hold themselves exempted from all acts and offices in society, of which that was not found to be the immediate effect. We conclude with observing, that Aristippus's licentious philosophy did not

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appear

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 2. pag. 135.

† Valer. Maxim. cap. 8. —9.

‡ Diogen. Laert. ibid. Seneca, de Tranquillitate Animi, cap. 14. edit. 8vo, p. 527.

appear * to divest him, personally, of a sense of humanity and friendship, or, if one exception be made, of generosity. Prevalent vanity, joined with the versatility of his temper, disposed him to think and to act in a way peculiar to himself, without regard to consistency, unless it was placed in being inconsistent. Amidst various proofs he gave of a liberal and obliging disposition, he chose to set a price upon his philosophical lectures, and to take money from every one admitted to them. He was the first of the *Socratics* who did so; notwithstanding the Athenian sage had returned his pecuniary present, and would receive no such gratuity from him.

In contradiction to the doctrines of the Cyrenaic sect, and as if it had been not alone to confute, but to pour contempt upon them, appeared about the same time, the surly preceptors of the *Cynic* school, of which Antisthenes was the founder, but not the most celebrated personage it produced. If the former thought themselves warranted in affirming that the pleasures of the senses, and the smooth motions of the mind, were the chief and only good, the latter asserted it to be a demonstrable truth, that the mind's dependency on extraneous, and accidental affections, or impressions, and to which vulgar opinion had assigned the denomination of pleasure or good, was altogether inconsistent with solid contentment and felicity. To this, the constancy of sentiment, and of action, found in virtue alone, was absolutely necessary †. The wisdom of life, therefore, said they, is nothing more than the science of virtue, which requires little instruction beyond what nature affords, and consists more in action than in study, or theoretical discipline. Assume, then, the *Socratic courage*; learn to labour, and to sustain what weak souls call hardship, and the native force of the mind will display itself. Soon it will be proved not to seek precariously, in exterior things, its true good, but to be the maker and the author of it. Be not dupes to silly names, like the Athenians, who boast of their being *natives* of their soil, and yet can have no more honour from their claim than belongs to the snails and locusts. Let not your conceptions of what is good or ill, honest or dishonest,

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* Plutarch. in *liberis educandis*.
lib. 6. p. 322. Ælian, var. hist. lib. 9.

† Diog. Laert.

dishonest, fuitable or shameful, be formed on common opinion, or regulated by civil laws and customs; which are divers and arbitrary. Call not any thing ill or good, indecent or decent, offensive or inoffensive, but vice and virtue. Account pain, reproach, and poverty, amongst the necessary and laudable labours of virtue; and dread the intoxications of pleasure as the bane of the mind, and not more eligible than madness. If it is to be sought at all, let it be that kind which follows labour, and not what goes before it. Riches, wealth, and honours, are as naturally despised by the wise man, as they are admired and coveted by the ignorant and foolish.

Such were the maxims which Antisthenes endeavoured to disseminate; when, after exhibiting his oratorical faculty amongst the declaimers, at the Isthmian games, and next becoming a hearer of Socrates, he, upon the death of that philosopher, instituted a school at Athens. He met with some discouragement in this undertaking, on account of his mother being no native, but a Thracian or Phrygian; and saw, with discontent, Plato, and other disciples of Socrates, admitted to privileges which were denied to him *. Retiring, therefore, to a neglected *gymnasium*, called the *Cynofarges*, he made it his auditory. As it was near the temple of the *white dog*, dedicated to Hercules Nothus, and had its name from thence, the disciples of his school were called *Cynics*, by a double allusion, as it would seem, to the name of the place of their resort, and also to the prominent feature of the sect, which was soon observed to be that of a *dog-like* impudence. Antisthenes, even while he attended Socrates, had affected singular fordidness in his dress, and often exposed its tattered parts. Do you imagine, said the philosopher to him, that virtue consists in a ragged garment; or that pride may not be observed to peep through its holes? He now doubled around him his worn out cloke, and made it serve for all his vestments; and, taking a staff, and an empty bag, when he went abroad, he appeared to proclaim abstinence and severity, in all the usages of life, to be essential to the character of a philosopher, and to reproach those who pretended to sustain it in another form. But this external figure of philosophy was

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* Suidas in voce *Cynofarges*, tom. 2. p. 398. Pausanias Atticis, lib. 1. p. 33.

new, and had not been beheld in the school of Socrates. The diet, the abode, the unseemly aspect, as well as the garb of Antisthenes, were a spectacle to many, but attracted few disciples *. Although, in the judgment of Theopompus, he excelled all the other *Socratics* in acuteness, and had a most winning elocution, and, according to Xenophon, his morals were no less virtuous, his auditory was little frequented; so that, as if ashamed of the paucity of his hearers, he began to repel the few that came, and to break up his school. *Cynicism* was on the point of being suppressed, when it had scarcely made its first appearance; and Antisthenes showed himself to be of a temper too weak to struggle with the difficulties of its introduction. He became morose, and was heard to speak ambiguously about the influence of the motives for throwing away life, or preserving it; when one disciple, to whom his lifted staff proved no repulse, but rather a bold invitation of the stroke, awakened his recollection of what persistence will accomplish; and whom, upon trial, he found to be more than equal to the hardest tasks which the most rigid philosophy could prescribe, and who could reduce, as he thought fit, all the wants of nature, deride the luxuries, and despise the conveniencies, of life, and seemed then most pleased and happy, when he could live and act in contradiction to all the habits, customs, and manners, he observed to obtain amongst mankind.

This was Diogenes of Sinope, whom the detection of his father's coinage of false money obliged to quit his country of Pontus; and fortune, or the fame of the city, brought to Athens. Antisthenes, upon whom he had fastened for instruction in philosophy, and would not leave him until he obtained it, had soon various proofs of the extraordinary genius of his disciple †. When sick, and in distress, the philosopher cried out, "Who will free me from this pain?" Diogenes presently run for a dagger, and showed it him. "I say from my pain, and not from my life," was the reply; for as yet the *apathy*, afterwards insisted upon, was not directly professed; and Antisthenes had not, it seems, resolved the question about the preference of death to life, accompanied with all its pains. When Diogenes came forth with the ensigns of his sect, which
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* Diogenes Laert. *ibid.*

† *Ibid.*

yet appeared to suit him better than his master, he was asked, "Half naked as you are, and such a spectacle, what do you profess to do?" "Hercules," said he, "had only his club and his lion's skin* : I make war as he did, but with monsters of a different kind. He, under orders, fought with beasts; I, of my own accord, encounter the vices and follies of the human mind, and strive to liberate men from them." "But, how frantic and unnatural is it," said another to him, "to declare yourself an enemy to pleasure, and to spurn what all men declare to be agreeable?" "You must have a shallow mind," answered he, "which extends not to every sense of pleasure, if you know not *that* which arises from its contempt, and that it is often easier to disdain than to seek it." To fortune, said he, I oppose courage; to law, or custom, nature; to perturbation, the strength of reason. To have this ability, he added, that a double *exercitation* was necessary; that of the body almost equally with that of the mind. They lean to, and are supported upon each other's vigour; and neither of them can be strong without a constant exertion of its natural strength. What practice will do, to beget ability in any performance, is daily beheld in the mechanic arts, and in those of wrestling and music. The practitioners readily acquit themselves well, in what others can never succeed. Rivals, they learn to improve, and to excel one another, in dexterity. We may judge whether they would not accomplish something more admirable, and more advantageous to themselves, if they took the same pains with their minds. The *exercitations* to which he enured himself were of the severest kind. Naked, and in winter, he embraced statues covered with snow. He rolled about in his tub; for why should he want, or wait for the fabrication of a house †? He threw aside his dish, when he observed a boy catch up water in the hollow of his hand; for, otherwise, he might have been outdone in bearing necessities: And yet he begged; and was as apt to be satirical upon those who gave him any thing as those who refused. "Although," said he, "all the imprecations of the tragedians have fallen upon me ‡, an exile and a beggar, yet

* Lucian, in vitarum auctione.

† Seneca, oct. edit. tom. i. p. 528.

‡ Cicero, Tusculan. Quæst. lib. 5. p. 191.

yet I want nothing. How much superior am I, then, as a man, to the king of Persia, who, in his pleasures, never has enough, but always desiderates something more? You needed not," said he * to Aristippus, have sneaked into the courts of princes, could you have cooked your dinner as I now do?" "And Diogenes needed not to have washed his herbs," replied Aristippus, "had he known how to converse with men." To those who alledged he strained nature in his efforts to bear wants, he answered, "If it be so, I do no more than the masters of the *Chorus*, who always exceed considerably in their tone, to keep others in the proper key." When a slave, and charged with the tutory of Xenocrates's sons at Corinth, he did not require them to come within many degrees of his personal *exercitations*. It is even credible, that some of his apothegms, thrown out in the *dialectic* form, were rather a burlesque upon the smatterers of logic, according to the mode of the schools, than positions in theology or morals, really advanced by him. Such was that loose and straggling syllogism, by which he is said to have proved, that all things belonged to the wise: "*All things appertain to the gods; the gods are the friends of wise men; all things are common amongst friends; therefore all things belong to the wise.*" Certain we are, that, being the satirical philosopher of nature's making, he launched his sarcasms against every

* Si pranderet olus patienter; regibus uti

Nollet Aristippus——

is, in Horace's words, Diogenes's sneer; and Aristippus's reply is in these terms?

——Si sciret regibus uti,

Fastideret olus, qui me notat.—Lib. 1. Epist. 17.

The poet gives Aristippus's reasons, why his manner of life was of preferable esteem to that of Diogenes. The question was evidently of difficult decision, as it related to a greater or less propriety in two opposite extremes; whether to be a king's jester, and parasite, without being disconcerted, and with the benefit of the office; or, from manly pride, to disdain such a life, and, in hatred of it, to hug poverty, without being in the least ashamed of its meanness, even although obliged to beg a little from the lowest of the people. Horace, as an Epicurean professed, and, as he owns, making a trip, now and then, to Aristippus's philosophy, and from other evident considerations, could not well avoid pronouncing the Cyrenaic philosopher's choice of life to be the *potior sententia*. Yet he does it with some hesitation; and rather in the way of descanting upon the argument than of deciding in it.

every sect, and gave scope to his sneers upon every profession but his own *. Was he not another Socrates? said some. Yes; if considered to be *Socrates turned fool, through too much wisdom.*

Of all the violences supposed to be done by him to nature, that committed upon modesty and decorum may be reckoned the most disgusting. In Athens, he aimed, absurdly indeed, at independency on all extraneous help or favour; but it was an independency which had a *wild* virtue for its object. In endeavouring to counteract every sensation of shame, and maintaining that any natural act might be done with the same assurance of face as another, he overlooked that *nature* he pretended to follow; and which, if but slightly attended to, gave manifest indications to the contrary †. At enmity with all customs and manners that obtained amongst civilized mankind, as unnatural impositions, he subverted also every exterior image of virtue, and thought he acted best her part, when he showed himself the *beast* of nature, without a spark of decorum or modesty. This, however, proved such a *stigma* upon the sect, that all the practised austerities of its retainers availed not to efface it. In vain did Crates turn all his estate into money, and, distributing it, or throwing it away, declare, "*Now I am free:*" In vain did Metrocles, to prove his contempt of fame, burn the books of philosophy he had composed; and Menedemus, to impress terror and conviction on the minds of the guilty and vicious, issue forth into the streets in the frightful figure of one of the *furies*, come from hell to note down, and report, the incorrigibly wicked. Their shameless demeanor, their insults upon modesty, their ostentation of poverty, while they often took what they wanted with a rapacious hand, rendered them generally odious. If the strong natural genius which appeared in Diogenes, the originality of his sentences, his making learned pride, as well as riches and luxury, the ob-
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* Ælian, var. hist. lib. 10.

† Nec vero audiendi sunt Cynici, says Cicero, aut si qui fuerunt Stoici, pene Cynici; qui reprehendunt, et irident, quod ea, quae turpia re non sunt, verbis flagitiosa dicamus; illa autem quae turpia sunt, nominibus appellemus suis. And again, Cynicorum vero ratio tota est ejicienda; est enim inimica verecundiae, sine qua, nihil rectum esse potest, nihil honestum.—De Officiis, lib. 1. p. 368.

ject of his satire, and his acquiescence in a state of slavery, created admiration, and procured him followers and applause; yet his successors in the Cynic order had not the like credit, but soon sunk into disesteem, and were accounted as unworthy to be ranked amongst the philosophers, as those who, upon Aristippus's principles, professed *sensuality*, but whose manners appeared to be less gross and offensive in society. Lucian, therefore, was authorised to describe either them, or their imitators, as a set of audacious miscreants, who, under the cloke of philosophy, spurning the first precepts of morals, conspired to shock the common feelings of mankind.

The hero of Macedonia, in admiration of Diogenes's philosophic constancy, which put him in want of nothing, said, "If I were not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes." They were most opposite characters; and yet, both being in extremes, they had one point of coincidence; which was, that each of them valued himself upon doing what none else was seen to perform. Diogenes, therefore, might, in propriety of character, have replied, "Was I not Diogenes, I would wish to be Alexander." "What amazing strength of mind * must that Cynic philosopher have possessed, who could so far restrain all the propensities of nature?" said a most eminent father in the Christian church. He proves, that the severity of the *Monastic life* is neither inconsistent with nature, nor involuntarily undergone, said others of the same dignified denomination. Wonder we need not that Alexander admired him; since he himself expected to be admired, and perhaps much envied too; not, indeed, for acting in the same manner, or proposing the same end, which the philosopher did, but for prosecuting his difficult purpose with a like invincible spirit. What then was admirable in, and what sought after by, them both? It was unequalled exertion, endurance of hardships, and a contempt of pain. This it was, which, in their own, and other men's opinion, exalted their characters; and it was to them the highest satisfaction to attain this end. But, does the human mind not only choose its principal object, but make the pursuit of that object, howsoever attended with apparent trouble, its greatest pleasure? Not only

* Augustin, in civitate Dei, lib. 9.

only a Diogenes, and an Alexander, bear testimony to this truth, but all philosophers who considered the active, as well as the passive part of the human constitution, and observed how much the former predominated, have been unanimous in maintaining it; and all men who ever sought after a constancy in their satisfactions, or aspired to such as rose above the gratification of the senses, have exemplified and confirmed it by exertions of the active powers of their minds. Does the mind then make its pleasures; or is pleasure a thing variable at its will? When most active in creating its pleasures, it is then most pleased; and, pleasure being only a general expression for what is agreeable, every man may call by that name the sensation he has, when he sets his mind upon any thing, and desires to accomplish, or to attain it, whether it would be so felt, or so termed by others, or not. Here we touch a hinge of the moral science, which, although already pointed out, requires more particular attention. How are the active powers of the mind most suitably and worthily exercised? What main direction are they capable of receiving? What counsel and aid does the light of reason afford; and, what concurrence does natural sentiment and affection supply to fix them in this direction? and, What extension, and what animation, moral ideas, and moral practice, receive from the survey of the operations of *mind* in the universe, and the general felicity of its influence? These are subjects of investigation, that rational inquirers wish to see again and again unfolded. They are in themselves highly important and interesting to mankind; and the evidence of truth to be found in them is rendered more perspicuous, and indubitable, by concurring testimonies. Even where the general scheme of the moral science appears to be varied, and one theorist to give it a different ground from another, the attestation is not invalidated, when it is evident, that the variation arises not from the uncertainty of the moral principles themselves, but from more or less extended views of these principles; or from a persuasion that some of them might be insisted upon with more propriety, and more strength of argument, than others. To refine in their speculations, and, unnecessarily, to make innovations, for the sake of appearing originals, is also known to be common to men of the greatest genius. The masters in the arts of painting and of sculpture, designing the same figure, or the same

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group, have been ever found, each of them, to interject some peculiar idea of his own invention; which, although a comparative novelty, instead of deviating from the design, was readily acknowledged to lend it more perspicuity, and a happier illustration. These observations may be not improperly made, when we are about to survey, along with other parts of the Grecian systems of philosophy, that capital one of the moral science, ably, and copiously, as we shall find it treated, by the distinguished founders of the Athenian schools, called the *Academy*, the *Lyceum*, the *Porch*, and the *Gardens*.

PART

PART V.

SECTION L

Of Plato;—his Institution of the Academy;—the Character he supported, the Fame of his School, and his Successors in it.

FE W of the philosophers, the accounts of whose lives are transmitted to us, can be reckoned to afford subject for interesting *biographies*. Placed, several of them, in obscure conditions, and others, who had rank or fortune in their native cities, choosing retirement, or to travel into foreign countries, the civil and moral actions of their lives were of course much contracted, or else withdrawn from particular observation. Hence the histories of their lives, detached from the survey of their philosophical opinions, have been generally patched up with frivolous narratives, or, at most, decorated with rehearsals of their wise sentences, often erroneously appropriated to individuals amongst them. But, as their speculative principles and tenets have been hitherto made the main subject of our investigation, so, in the parts of it now to be prosecuted, we still dispense with *details* of their lives, frequently as unsatisfying to curiosity, as they are defective of entertainment: Yet, since the name of Plato, and of his Academic School, stands high in any *scale* of philosophic ingenuity, we shall include in this section such particulars with regard to him, and his immediate successors, as may enable us to judge of the esteem in which their characters, as men and philosophers, were held.

Plato had for his parents Aristo and Potona; the one reputed to be of an ancient Athenian family, and the other acknowledged the fifth in lineal descent from Solon. The time of his birth is not more exactly fixed than to the 87th or 88th Olympiad; although it was allowed * to have ensued in the *Archonship* of Lyfimachus, and to have been six years later than that of Isocrates, which happened about the time of Pericles's death. He was probably destined by his parents for other occupations than those of the Muses, or philosophical study; and the first education he received was suited to one nearly related to Chabrias, the Athenian general, and connected with others of eminent rank in the commonwealth. His personal make and constitution also seemed to have favoured his appointment to the military life; and, in the course of the *Gymnastic* exercises, he is said to have got his first name †, which was Aristocles, changed to that of *Plato*, from the broad cast of his shoulders and chest being often observed by his masters. That he bore, when a youth, a part in some military expeditions, and acquitted himself with honour, is likewise narrated. The frequent factions in the republic, which turned to the prejudice of Chabrias, and his other friends, would tend to discourage, and interrupt his attachment to the civil or active employments of the state †. His taste for painting and poetry would contribute still farther to alienate his mind from them. As he had the faculty of composing poetical pieces in various kinds of verse, he began to reckon himself a considerable adept in them all, when the reading of Homer discovered to him his great inferiority in the heroic strain. Naturally sedate and bashful as he was, his youthful ardour made him indulge the thought of contending for the Olympic laurel in tragedy; but, upon hearing a discourse from Socrates upon such competitions, he at once renounced all the merit of his poetical works; and, invoking Vulcan instead of the Muses, consigned them to the flames. His attendance upon the Sage commenced not sooner than at the age of twenty; and he enjoyed the advantages of it for eight years, until Socrates's death.

Plato

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 3. pag. 163.
pag. 382.

† Seneca, oct. edit. tom. 1.

† Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 10.

Plato was received into the Socratic school as a disciple of whose genius the most favourable presages might well be formed; and his close application to study, joined with the most composed temper, and regular manners, tended to confirm them. That he possessed the natural talents of an orator, and, if he had cultivated rhetoric, would have shone as a master of its rules, we may readily believe, although Cicero * had not given his testimony to it. Acquainted with all or most of Socrates's associates and pupils, he appears to have distinguished Isocrates by particular marks of his esteem and friendship. The encomium which, in Socrates's name, he inscribes of him † in his *Phaedrus*, is remarkable not only for the preference of him, as an orator, to Lysias, but for its correspondence with the sentiment held forth in the dialogue, "that signal excellence in the liberal arts, and especially in those of *writing and speaking*, must have for its source some portion from nature of a *philosophic genius* ‡, such as Isocrates early discovered." That the finer arts and sciences have a connection, and that there is not unfrequently in the same mind a participation of the faculty for both, was perhaps never more verified than in the instance of Plato himself §. His *Phaedrus*, reckoned to have been the first dialogue he composed, showed how a youthful, warm, and luxuriant imagination could not easily moderate its conceptions, and reduce them either to that order and perspicuity, or express them in the unadorned style, and strict language, which the delivery of any philosophic doctrine required. But that, after repeated struggles with his poetic fancy, he could, as much as dialogue composition admitted, lay aside all superfluity either of matter or words, and assume the close, energetic, and decisive ratiocination of the dialect, learned from his master, is evident from several brilliant copies of it in his works. Here we inquire not how far his genius might incline him to carry the flights of his imagination into his philosophical theories; we only observe, that it was so profound and extensive as to render the

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* De Officiis, lib. 1. ad init.
tore, pag. 251.

† Ad finem Dialogi. Cicero in Oratore, pag. 251.
‡ Positum igitur sit in primis, sine philosophia non posse effici quem quaerimus *eloquentiam*, is a maxim often repeated by Cicero, in Oratore ad Brutum.

§ Diogen. Laert.

abstruse and severe studies of geometry, astronomy, arithmetic, physics, ethics, and politics, not only objects of his attention, but fields of knowledge, in which his capacity enabled him to advance with facility and success, and soon to become, in almost all of them, an eminent master.

After Socrates's death, he became a hearer of Cratylus, who had been Heraclitus's disciple, and also of Hermogenes, who adhered to Parmenides's doctrine. The retreat of the Socratics to Megara gave him an opportunity to converse with Euclid, and those who attended his school. For mathematical instruction he repaired to Cyrene, where Theodorus, otherwise no eligible preceptor, taught that science with the greatest reputation. To be acquainted with the philosophy of Pythagoras he passed into Italy, and met with Philolaus, Archytas, and Eurytus, the instructed disciples of the Italian school. His next resort was to Egypt, to learn of the Priests the science of numbers, and the celestial motions, says one author *; to survey the Nile, and the wonderful canals derived from it, says another †; to be informed of the traditions of antiquity, and the opinions of the wise men concerning the origin of the world, and the revolutions it had undergone, or might be subject to, says a third ‡; all which are nothing more than the vague conjectures thrown out by authors, one after another, about what the Grecian philosopher, in their opinion, desired particularly to know, or superficial hints of what he might be instructed in, when a resident in Egypt, confessed to be the greatest fountain of general science. Twelve years were requisite to complete the course of his studies §, and the information he wished to obtain. But in what manner the former was conducted, or to what the latter amounted, we as little understand, as we do the particulars of the proficiency of the many Grecian geniuses who preceded him in the same tract of literary knowledge. Plato, indeed, is not so reserved as others of his countrymen, in making his general acknowledgements of what they owed, in point of erudition, to the Egyptians, and other foreign nations. Yet, if instead of introducing some of their fabulous histories,

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* Cicero de Finib. lib. 5.

† Socratic. Epist.

‡ Apuleius de Dogmatis Platonis, lib. 1.

§ Strabo, lib. 17.

and occasional commendations of their laws and usages, he had given an account of the general state of learning amongst them, he would have better acquitted himself, and the Grecian philosophers, from the charge of invidiously concealing it. We have from none of them who were the most capable, and had all opportunity to give the information, any such essay or treatise. Their early historians, in whom some shreds of it are found, were rather unequal to the task; their later ones, who had more scientific knowledge, were accused of sacrificing the honour of their country for the sake of embellishing their narratives, when extended to foreign nations, with representations of their discoveries and improvements in philosophy, and the arts, which were only known among the Greeks, and could not be pretended to by them. Thus the investigation of what was communicated to the Grecians on these subjects, and what they originally invented themselves, was rendered mysterious, and must remain doubtful and intricate.

Upon his return from Egypt, about the age of forty, Plato commenced, at Athens, his public teaching of philosophy. He chose for it a place in the suburbs, called the Grove, or wood of *Hecademus*, from an old hero * of that name who inhabited it in the time of Theseus, and had given it some dedication. It was afterwards, from its marshy situation, accounted unhealthful, and not frequented, until Cimon, the Athenian general, intersected it with drains. It being inclosed with a wall, and naturally agreeable from its shaded walks, it became the resort of the retired and studious. Plato found its air not the most salutary; but declined changing a residence in other respects eligible to him. An unmercenary teacher of philosophy, his *Academy* open to all addicted to liberal study, soon rose to reputation, and was no less distinguished † by the eminent quality than by the number of its students. Not only the great abilities and universal literature of its master excited admiration, but

* Plutarch. in *Symposiacis*, lib. 8. quæst. 4. et in *Vita Thesei*. Pausanias *Atticis*, pag. 54. Suidas in voce *Ακαδημία*. This Philologist alledges, that the word was used neutrally, *Ακαδημειον*, and also, that it was contracted sometimes into *Αδηναια*, to signify a place of retirement, and unfrequented by ordinary people. † Diogen. Laert. et Marselius Ficinus, in *vita*.

but his moral lectures on virtue and decorum, his grave manners, and exemplary sobriety, impressed reverence of science, and of the exterior graces that adorn it amongst all his auditors. Over the Academic porch was inscribed, "*Let none enter here ignorant of Geometry;*" a sentence which was understood to have a reference to moral, as well as to mathematical ideas *. Long was the memory preserved of the chaste and correct discipline of his school, and of the many intelligent and virtuous characters formed under it. In ages after, the Grecian and Roman youth, of whatever sect, could not approach the avenues of the Academy without recognising the veneration due to it. And even the virulent detractor † of Plato has inserted an encomium, accompanied with a sneer, upon the representatives of his school, as they appeared in his time. "Do you observe this man, who expresses himself in language so polished, who is always decently dressed, and never does any thing but what is proper and becoming him? you may believe you see in him all the boast of the Academy." And what other exterior, it may be said, could so properly denote a person who had education, knew decorum, and had formed to himself a suitable rule of action and behaviour?

The next particular of Plato's life should be the narrative of his first voyage to Sicily, where he went to observe the natural curiosities of the island,

* Horace, instead of Epicurus's garden, appears to have taken his first philosophic walk in the *academic* grove:

Scilicet, ut possem curvo dignoscere rectum,

Atque inter silvas *Hecadem*i quaerere verum. Epistol. lib. 2.

Piso, according to Cicero's representation, upon visiting the old Academy, amongst with his associates, felt a transport of veneration, which he expressed in the following terms. "Naturae nobis hoc datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut, cum ea loca videamus, in quibus memoria dignos viros acceperimus multum esse versatos, magis moveamur, quam si quando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus, aut scriptum aliquod legamus? velut ego nunc moveor. Venit enim mihi Platonis in mentem, quem acceperimus primum hic disputare solitum; cujus etiam illi hortuli propinqui non memoriam solum mihi afferunt; sed *ipsum* videntur in conspectu meo hic ponere. Hic Speusippus, hic Xenocrates, hic ejus auditor, Polemo; cujus ipsa illa sessio fuit, quam videmus, &c. In Finibus, lib. 5. in initio.

† Athenaeus, lib. 7.

island, and with the special purpose of beholding the *Crater*, and other stupendous appearances of *Ætna*, objects striking in themselves, and attractive to every mind in the least turned to physical inquiries. But how he proceeded, or what was the issue of this undertaking, his own writings, and those of others, are silent. In place of this desirable information, we only learn that he was invited to the court of Dionysius, the elder of that name, despot of Sicily. The philosopher's interview with a king of such a character *, and who had literature enough to value himself upon it, should be entertaining; yet the imperfect account delivered, with variations, by every author, hardly merits a recital. That Dionysius, insisting upon the necessity and expediency of his absolute sway, and, upon being contradicted by Plato, should fall into passion, threaten him with death, and dismiss him, under the condition of his being sold for a slave, however true a picture of the tyrant, forms but an insipid passage of history †. Whether the philosopher, having by this time made Dion, and a few other noble Sicilians, converts to his political principles, provoked the tyrant's jealousy and rage, we are not well assured ‡. Some authors, with Izetzes, refer Plato's expulsion from Sicily solely to this cause. The connection he formed with Dion, and the honour he had in being the instructor of a youth possessed of natural ingenuity, and liberality of heart and mind, is, together with the sequel of it, an episode too large to be here inserted, and cannot be related to advantage ||, but in the light, and at the length, which Plutarch has given it. To that author we must turn, and to the epistles of Plato, for information about what is curious in the occasion and circumstances

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* Cicero, *Tuscul. Quaest.* lib. 5.

† To enliven the story, a circumstance is told about his landing in the isle of *Ægina*, where capital punishment had been decreed for every Athenian who came ashore. He was seized, and might have been put to death; but one of the people having said, in jest, "It is only an unlucky mistake made by a philosopher, and it will be enough to have him sold," the rest were put into good humour; and so no harder fate befel him. He was redeemed, it is said, by some of his friends, for twenty minae. But there seems to be a mixture of fiction in several parts of the narrative.

‡ Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

|| In Dion. Vita.

of his two other voyages to Sicily, upon the succession of the younger Dionysius to the government. From them, joined with some anecdotes from Aulus Gellius *, and Apuleius, we may understand, if not the whole schemes of the philosopher, and his friend Dion, at least how eager their solicitation, and how great their hopes were, of obtaining a grant of a district of land from Dionysius, for the purpose of establishing a republican colony. The singular esteem in which Plato was held by the king, who was as anxious to have his approbation and friendship, as he was apprehensive of Dion's designs against his government, must be considered to be consistent not only with the mild trait of Dionysius's character, but also the effect of one peculiar to the times, when philosophers were called to the courts of princes, as much, or more, for the sake of reputation and popularity; and, perhaps, with a view to the future celebration of their names, than any real regard to their persons, or profession. Even the elder Dionysius, haughty as he was, reflecting on the usage he had given Plato, and that his fame might suffer by it, entreated the philosopher, by letter, not to make him the subject of his invectives. "Employed sufficiently at the Academy, I have not leisure to think of Dionysius," was the reply. Without supposing the motive that has been mentioned to have operated on the mind of the younger Dionysius, the whole account of Plato's intercourse with him must be resolved into a sort of counterplot to Dion's practices against his authority, and a train of artifice that cannot, even with that gloss, be explained.

But if Plato's designs, in thrice visiting Sicily, were not altogether apparent, his detractors, and those who envied his reputation, were at no loss to interpret them. What other purpose could he have, said they, but to ingratiate himself with Dionysius, to make an essay of his bounty, and regale himself at the famed Sicilian *messes*? Xenophon, alas, joined in the last part of the censure; he who must have known what temperate meals were made at the Academy; and that the greatest commendation of the suppers there was, that none repented of them in the morning. Rivalship for Socrates's esteem had early cooled the regard of these his

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* Lib. 17. Apuleius de Dogmatis, lib. 1.

two disciples for each other; and, as the line they took in life was different, so their literary compositions marked the diversity of their genius; while each of them was allowed to excel, at least in all his considerable productions, every other competitor. Where their subjects coincided*, as in the *Symposia*, and a few other dialogues by Xenophon, a comparison between them could not be instituted; so transcendent was Plato's genius in this species of writing†. Although others before him had given laudable specimens of it, he was acknowledged, even by those who derogated from his merit, to have been its truest original, and noblest pattern, and to have perfected its art, and displayed all the elegance, accuracy, and propriety, of which it was capable. The sublime contemplations of some of his dialogues, treated in a style adequate to them, obtained him the name of the Divine Philosopher‡; and Jove himself, it was said, if he spoke Greek, would have expressed himself in the diction of Plato. Aristotle, if he compared his master's style with the sterility of his own, might well be allowed to call it, as he does, a mixed one§, between prose and poetry. It is, above all others, says Cicero, sweet, grave, and copious: And Dionysius Halicarnassensis, although he criticises it as variable, and even different, according to the subjects of the dialogues, admits, in many of them, a similar, and in some a higher, commendation.

Beside the dialogical composition being in the manner of Socrates, and in the taste of the learned amongst the Greeks, Plato might prefer it the more as a proper vehicle to the parts of his philosophy that had a foreign air, and which, if held forth in a systematic form, or in any one less agreeable, would not have been relished, or but by a few. It has been observed, that he innovated upon the philosophy of his master, and especially incorporated with it many of the doctrines of Pythagoras. Aristotle calls him||, in most things, a follower of that philosopher, or those of his sect; and the judgment soon formed of his philosophic theo-

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* Athenaeus, lib. 11. pag. 505.—6.

† Diogen. Laert. ibid.

‡ Cicero. de Optim. Gener. Orat. pag. 305. Ibid. de Clarif. Orat. pag. 219.

Ibid. in Orat.

§ De Demonstratione, lib. 2.

|| Metaphys.

lib. 1. cap. 6.

ries was, that, in them, he blended together the reasonings of the disciples of Heraclitus, of the Pythagoreans, and the Socratics. In the doctrine about things perceived by the senses, he was reckoned to correspond with the first; in what related to intellect, with the second; and in moral and political subjects, with the third. But, in the dialogues, necessarily supported upon the intervention, and arguments, of two, three, or more persons, it is not always evident whether the probable opinions delivered by some of them be or be not agreeable to the tenets of Socrates, and, consequently, of Plato, who professed to follow him only as a master in philosophy. The reasoning, frequently, does not make this point clear, especially in regard to the arguments of two of the dialogists, under the general denominations of the Athenian Host, and the Stranger of Elea *. Plato, it seems, used certain *marks* in his writings, to signify Socrates's approbation or disapprobation of what was advanced by the other dialogists; but these, as transmitted to us, have been found insufficient to make the distinction. The only rule, therefore, that could be given with respect to it, was an imperfect one; that Socrates, or Plato, was to be understood to hold that to be true, which he explains and asserts; that to be false, which he confutes; and that to be doubtful, which he leaves undecided. Hence it early became a matter of dispute, whether Plato was to be accounted a dogmatist or not; since many of his dialogues conclude not in the direct affirmative strain, but with the Socratic hesitation and reserve. When he is read along with the forced glosses which interpreters and commentators have put upon him, he may appear to some as positive in his opinions and doctrines as they generally are. But the ancients, who had few of these to consult,

* In Diogenes Laertius we find preserved nine of these peculiar signatures, which served, beside denoting the variations of Socrates's assent or dissent, not always conspicuous in the dialogical argumentation, to mark his use of new words, and figures of speech. But the application of the latter, as well as of the former, proved a ground of controversy to the learned; who found much the same difficulty in assigning each of them their proper places, as we know they do in understanding the meaning of other similar characters made use of by some ancient authors, and met with in particular copies of their books. Diog. lib. 3. p. 204. edit. Ægidii Megnagii.

sult, and needed not such help to understand him, pronounced a very different judgment of his dialogues, as appears from that of Cicero *, Sextus Empiricus, and others. Even in the *Timaeus*, he holds forth a physical and moral system of the universe, which he thought the best of any delivered by the philosophers; but neither gives it as his own, nor maintains it to be an indubitable one, unattended with difficulties, and liable to no objections. He is to be considered, says Themistius †, as performing, in philosophy, a service similar to that which Theseus did for the city of Athens. Disjoined as its parts were, and when only some one or another of them was chiefly taught in the Grecian and foreign schools, he collected them together, and endeavoured to render his works a vehicle of the whole. If this be the just view to be taken of his dialogues, the labours of Theodoret, and, after him, of Bayle, and other modern writers, who have taken pains to point out his inconsistencies and contradictions, are misapplied, and cannot claim much attention. He is allowed, indeed, to have invented several things of his own, and interspersed them with his dialogical reasoning; in which he appears to consider it as an excellence to make every branch of science coalesce with another, and logic come in aid of geometry, arithmetic of metaphysics, and even tradition, or poetical fable, in support of physical theory. From this intermixture of proofs, beyond what any analogy amongst the sciences can justify, his arguments are sometimes unperspicuous and abstruse, and more specious and fanciful than convincing; and to it, joined with what we have observed about two of the dialogists, the obscurity complained of in his reasoning may be referred.

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* According to Cicero's reckoning, no distinction could be made between Plato's old Academy, and that afterwards called the New, which approached to a species of scepticism. *Hanc Academiam novam appellabant; quae mihi vetus videtur, si quidem Platonem ex illa vetere numeramus; cujus in libris nihil affirmatur, et in utramque partem, multa differuntur; de omnibus quaeritur nihil certi dicitur, &c. Acad. Quaest. lib. 1. in fine.* Sextus Empiricus admits, that Plato might be called by some an *Aporeomaic*, or a doubter, and, by others, a dogmatist; although he will by no means allow him to be a Sceptic, in his sense of the term. *Pyrron. Hypotyp. lib. 1. c. 33.*

† Oratio 26. fol. edit. pag. 318. 19. 20.

To enter into the details of the little jealousies and disgusts which are said to have arisen between Plato and his contemporaries, Antisthenes, Aristippus, Æschines, and others, would be a frivolous labour; and which, as for any instruction to be got from it, Diogenes Laertius might have spared. He might also have omitted stating a lame proof of Alcimus's opinion, that Plato was indebted for his instruction in the Pythagorean philosophy chiefly to the poems of Epicharmus; although it was generally allowed, that, by conversing with the early disciples of that school, and purchasing the books of Philolaus, he must have been acquainted with better authorities. To conclude, then, this sketch of Plato's life and character, we have only farther to observe, that the profession of philosophy received, in his person, the most signal honours. Upon his appearance at the Olympic games, the eyes of all the spectators were turned upon him; and the contenders for the prizes were, for a while, relinquished by the multitude *. His statue, dedicated to the muses, was set up in the Academy by Mithridates, the son of Rhodobatus, a Persian nobleman. Aristotle, destined as he was by his genius to rival him in philosophic fame, forsook not his lectures for near twenty years; and, upon his death, erected, according to the custom of the Greeks, an altar to his memory. "To *the Man*," he engraved upon it, "is this altar consecrated, from whose commendation let the vicious and immoral ever abstain, as a thing not lawful to them. In life, doctrine, and manners, subsequent ages will hardly produce his equal." This honour, together with that of an oration writ in a similar strain of praise, paid to him by such a judge as Aristotle, and who had so much opportunity of knowing him, must be accounted a tribute, not of gratitude only, but of truth, and which emulation itself could not withhold. In the state of celibacy, and while yet, at the age of eighty-one †, he held the pen in his hand, he is said, upon his birth-day, to have made a sudden and easy exit. He was buried, with much funeral solemnity, in his Academic Grove; and his tomb was inscribed with three epigrams, which Diogenes Laertius has recorded, adding two of his own composition.

* Diogenes Laert. *ibid.*

† Cicero de Senectute, pag. 407. Seneca, *ibid.* tom. 1. pag. 382. Pausanias Atticis, pag. 58. Marsilius Ficinus in Vita.

tion. The fine distich which is reckoned to supply the loss of Aristophanes's epitaph is commonly ascribed to Plato, who held him in esteem, and recommended his comedies to Dionysius's perusal, when he desired information about the popular manners and usages of the Greeks. The time of his death coincides with the 13th year of the reign of Philip, the Macedonian king, which commenced the 1st year of the 108th Olympiad.

He was succeeded in the Academy by Speusippus, his sister's son, who followed the doctrine, but not the moral or generous example of his kinsman *. He was passionate, addicted to pleasure, and mercenary. The natural infirmity of his constitution issued in a paralytic disorder, which made him melancholy, and, as was believed, a suicide in his old age. Yet the account of him which we find in Plutarch †, far from being so unfavourable, is contradictory to these strokes Laertius has given his character, the traits of which the access of his distemper might vary, or render of a doubtful cast. His abilities as a philosopher were proved by several pieces written by him, chiefly in the form of *Commentaries* and *Dialogues*; and they must have had at least the estimation of merit, if, according to Phavorinus, Aristotle thought them worth purchasing at three talents. He presided in the Academy only eight years, in the museum of which he erected the statues of the *Graces*. Finding his constitutional debility increase, he invited Xenocrates to take the charge of the Academic discipline.

Xenocrates, the son of Agathenor, a Chalcedonian, was that noted disciple of Plato, whose natural dulness contrasted the penetrating genius of Aristotle ‡. His respectful attention, and attachment to his master, were also the more remarkable, when compared with the indifference, and rather petulant manner, of his associate in the Academy. Yet his apparent defects were, in some measure, compensated, by abstinence from all diversions and pleasures, constant application to study, and, notwithstanding his slow capacity in other respects, by his readily conceiving,

* Diogen. Laert. in Vita.

† De Adulatione, et in Vita Dionis.

‡ Diogen. Laert. lib. 4. Ælian. Cicero, Epist. ad Atticum, lib. 1. et in Officiis, lib. 1.

ceiving, and being evidently sensible to, all the precepts of virtue. As he grew up to manhood, the gravity and austerity of his manners appeared to have the softening of innate humanity and benevolence. Innocence and integrity, expressed in his general deportment, commanded esteem and reverence, even without the aid of the *Graces*, to which Plato often advised him to sacrifice. When joined with other Athenian envoys to the Macedonian court, he would accept of no presents from Philip, and declined going to the feasts and entertainments which that prince gave with the view of corrupting his colleagues. Upon the report of the negotiation being demanded at Athens, and his answering, that he pretended not, for his part, to have done any thing in it, the people were about calling him to an account for negligence; but they soon understood in what sense his associates had shown themselves more active. Being obliged in court to deliver his testimony, upon oath, the Athenian judges, when he said, "I now declare the truth," rose from their seats, and insisted, that no other confirmation of his veracity was requisite; and his simple asseveration was afterwards admitted in all the tribunals.

Several of the vulgar debauchees had sometimes thrown themselves in his way, in scorn of his gravity*; but none had presumed to intrude upon the place, and time of his prelections to his students, until Polemo, the most dissolute and daring of the sons of riot, rushed into his school, and, intoxicated as he was, and with all his *Bachanalian* attire, seated himself under his eye. Xenocrates observed him; and, without being in the least discomposed, turned his discourse to the becoming virtues of modesty and temperance†. The lecture, accompanied with a reprehensive look, had the effect of dispelling Polemo's intoxication. He stole off the garlands that wreathed his neck and head. His assured countenance changed to dejection; and, after his retirement, much to the

* Diog. Laert. in Polem. Valerius Maximus.

† ————— Quaero, faciasne quod olim,
Mutatus Polemo, ponas insignia morbi
Fasciolas, cubital, focalia; potus ut ille,
Dicitur ex collo, furtim carpisse coronas,
Postquam est impransu correptus voce magistri. Hor. Sat. 3. lib. 2.

the confusion of all the votaries of irregularity, Polemo was found a convert to the study of morals and philosophy. Xenocrates's refusal of a present of fifty talents, sent him from Alexander, by his ambassadors, was in the character of a philosopher, and also not indecent in the manner of it *. He invited them to supper in the Academy, at which the meat and drink presented were of the plainest kind, and of small cost. Next day, being asked by them to whom they should pay the money, "I thought," answered he, "that, from yesternight's sober meal, you might have understood how little I had occasion for such a sum; however, that I may not appear to disdain your master's liberality, I shall be indebted to him for thirty *minae*," which was only equal to half a talent, or the hundredth part of what was offered.

In philosophy, Xenocrates adhered closely to the doctrines of his master; so far at least as they were conceivable to him †. He insisted strenuously upon the principle, that the human soul was not corporeal, but a self-moving number, which had the greatest power in nature. In his estimate of things external to the mind, he undervalued, and rejected their utility, beyond what Plato had done. Hence Cicero ‡ calls him the severest of the philosophers. He vulgarised much in his notions about the planets and fixed stars, and hesitated between making one divinity, or more gods of them. His compositions were numerous; and, amongst them, those on the elements and rules of rational discourse received great approbation. His death ensued in the 25th year of his regency in the Academic school, and the 82d of his age, corresponding to about the 116th Olympiad.

Polemo, reclaimed from all his dissolute habits to the practice of virtue, and a proficient in philosophy, became Xenocrates's successor in the Academy. Crantor, his fellow disciple, from his eminent reputation, might have pretended to the honourable place, and his competition for it was generally expected; when affection and respect made him decline. Retiring, upon the accident of sickness, to the *Asclepian* temple,

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* Cicero, Tusc. Quaest. lib. 5.
et Tusc. Quaest. lib. 1. pag. 118.
lib. 4.

† Ibid. Acad. Quaest. lib. 1. et 4.;
‡ De Officiis, lib. 1.; et Acad. Quaest.

many were persuaded that he meant to institute there a separate school *. But, although he was followed thither by numbers of the students, he gave this indication, amongst others, that he had no such purpose or desire. Arcefilas, his lover, coming to him with the request of a recommendation to Polemo, he not only granted it, but, upon the recovery of his health, went himself to attend the lectures given in the Academy. "I was attracted," said he to Polemo, "when a con-disciple, by his equal tone of voice; which on no occasion was either too much elevated or depressed." It was a symptom of that singular composure, mistaken by some for obduracy of mind, by which that convert to philosophy distinguished himself. He confessed that he admired in Xenocrates his apparent innocence and his dry manner, and wished to have a strain of his gravity; which, said he, operates in the human character as the deep Doric tone does in musical composition. He, who had experienced the sway of the passions, when once yielded to, had his reasons for prescribing it as a maxim in the practice of morals, "not to relax the assumed tone of the mind, but rather to be pertinacious and obstinate in preserving its uniformity." "It becomes us," said he, "to discover our chief address and ability, not in the dialectic art, but in the actions of life; since, for admired skill in the first, we should rather blush, if untaught to maintain the consistency and order of our affections." Urbanity, however, which was natural to his birth and fortune, he so retained, as to make it perceptible in the midst of all his internal constancy. To the study of philosophy, he joined the reading of the more dignified poets; and used to call Homer the Epic Sophocles, and Sophocles the Tragic Homer. "I am well pleased," said he, "with those passages, in which, as the comic wits say, Sophocles seems to have had some deep mouthed Molossian dog at his side at the time he composed; and no less, when, softening his strain, he makes description flow like the limpid stream; or, soaring only as the Attic bee, discovers the sweet spoils he has gathered from the flowers of Parnassus." He lived in honour and esteem at Athens; although he made choice of privacy and retirement. A small garden served for his auditory; in
which

* Diog. Laert. in Polem.

which he pronounced his lectures, oftener when walking than sitting. The lodges the students of philosophy built for themselves nigh his recesses, showed their attachment to his discipline. Of his compositions there are said to have been a considerable variety, as he lived to old age; but scarcely any character of them remains, beside Antiochus's approbation of them mentioned by Cicero *; and, as to his philosophical speculations, unless so far as they were reckoned in general to correspond to those of Plato and Xenocrates, nothing is to be collected worthy of notice.

The succession to the Academic school, upon Polemo's death, is not so distinctly ascertained, but that a doubt has been made, whether Crantor should not be included in it. Most probable, however, it appears, that, notwithstanding his fame was great as an academician, he never attained to the regency, and even that his death preceded that of Polemo and Crates. He was the first, according to Proclus, who wrote commentaries on Plato's works. But his most valued production was that upon *Grief*, which Cicero calls a small but precious treatise †, and Panaetius recommended to be got off, every word of it, by memory. Crates, therefore, is to be reckoned the fourth successor in the Academy; with respect to whom no particulars related are so memorable, as the intimacy and friendship between him and Polemo. Their studies, their exercises, and their amusements, had been the same in youth, and continued to be so through their advanced years. Thus known to have been inseparably connected in their minds, tastes, and dispositions, one sepulchre is said to have received them both, and one epitaph to have adorned their memory.

Arcefilas, who had studied under Autolychns, the mathematician of his own country, and Theophrastus, Aristotle's disciple, at Athens, had introduced himself, by his acquaintance with Crantor, into the Academy. By his advancement to the regency, its name subsequently came to be altered to that of the *Middle Academy*, partly from the circumstance of his deviating, in an important point, from Plato's doctrine,

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and

* Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 35.

† Ibid. pag. 36.

and more especially because his school was followed by another, called the *new* one, for a similar reason. But the explications of these divisions of the Academy must be preceded by the account of Plato's philosophy, which, therefore, becomes the subject of the sections that follow.

SECT.

SECTION II.

Of the Division of Philosophy by Plato;—of the Dialectic and Metaphysical parts;—Sketches of the Reasoning in both.—Of Ideas, and the Participation of them.—Arguments for the Immortality of the Human Soul.—Conceptions of Deity, and Providence.—Vanity of Physics without reference of Natural Acts to Ends.

PHILOSOPHY, or science in general, was divided by Plato into two parts; one *theoretical*, and the other *practical*, or *effective*; and to these the *dialectic* might be joined * as necessary, and conducive to the explication and proper understanding of both. In respect of its object, *theoretical* science was deemed to be conversant about *essences*, primary and immutable, and what might be termed the *things that are*, and such as were first causes of other things; and, in this view, it communicates to the human mind true and divine knowledge, or *wisdom*, properly so called. Then, also, it demonstrates truths so intelligible, that they cannot appear otherwise; as, in the proved theorems of mathematics, and numbers, which, therefore, beget just contemplations. It further comprehends the investigation of the motions and revolutions of the *celestial* bodies, together with that of the fabric, and the productions of the earth, and of the original constitution of man; whence arises all *physical* doctrine, which has for its foundation rational or probable *opinion*. The *practical* part of philosophy considers man's actions and passions, and
more

* Dialog. de Regno, vel Civilis.

more especially as they are relative to his place here below amidst terrestrial beings, and his particular condition, whether as an individual, or as a part of a family, or a member of a commonwealth. It, therefore, instructs him in morals, in oeconomics, and in politics.

Philosophic science may therefore be defined the *study and desire of divine wisdom, conjoined with the prudential knowledge of good and evil in human life, and of these things in it that are neutral or indifferent*. To suppose that science consists * in the perception of external objects, with observation of their differences from one another, and a distinction of their several qualities and effects, is a superficial and imperfect view of it. The acts of the mind relative to all these, whether it notes them or numbers them, or distinguishes their properties and energies, may still amount to no more than to a conception of them as *singulars*, which is the simplest appearance of rational judgment, and cannot be deemed science, that has for its object general truths. The natural capacity of the human soul may be proved, in many instances, to go further than to the distinguishing of one and many, great and small, in objects, or of what is useful and hurtful, agreeable and disagreeable in actions; since, untutored, and without instruction, it can form to itself a conception of unity, magnitude, utility, pulchritude; ideas of a general nature, and a species of intelligence, which surpasses the reach of the senses, and cannot be ascribed to the impression of corporeal objects, unless the effect be imagined greater than the cause. Philosophy, therefore, cultivates this faculty of the soul as the best help to her inquiries, both in physical and in moral subjects.

From the more narrow and limited views of science, taken by philosophers, various abuses of reason, and many absurd and gross assertions, have arisen. Amongst other instances which might be given, that of Protagoras is a remarkable one. Finding it to be the physical principle of Heraclitus, Empedocles, and of the generality of the philosophers, and, along with them, that of the two greatest poets in their kind, Homer and Epicharmus, "that all things flowed," this famous
Sophist

* Plato in Dialog. de Repub. lib. 7. Apuleius de Dogmate Platonis. In Æthicis. Diogen. Laert. ibid.

Sophist grafted upon it this singular and extravagant tenet, "that sensation was science," and that every man's opinion * of every thing was true, and he the measure of all things, as existing, or not existing, to himself. It is obvious with what plausibility he might support his *dialectic* position upon his physical principle. If all things, in every instant, flowed, then nothing could be properly said to be one thing more than another, but only to have an apparency of existence; since what flows *never is*, but always, at most, *about to be*. But, as has been already shown, he might insist, that this apparency, however instantaneous, was all that could be reckoned upon in human opinion, or judgment of any thing, and, therefore, must be held, whether various or not, alike true to every man, according to his sensation. Although this position has had a particular confutation, we shall here add that of Plato, as we find it stated by him † in the dialectic manner. "Protagoras affirms, that every man's opinion of every thing is true ‡. *He does*. He then thinks it to be so. *Surely*. And he thinks the contrary opinion to be false? *No*. He *only says, he knows it not*. Is it then a thing to him unknown, or what he is ignorant of? *It is so*. And he thinks it to be such? *Yes, in a manner*. But say how? *As of a thing out of his thought, and not existent there*. Can any person be sensible of a thing not in his thought, which has never been, and may not be there? *What else is his sense of nothing?* So Protagoras's opinion or judgment of any thing is true, and yet opposed to nothing. As standing, therefore, by itself, and having no contrary, it can neither be reckoned true nor false. It is only a simple and unrelative opinion, which, indeed, is no more than a modification of thought. *But, allowing that an opinion, in order to be denominated true, must have a contrary; yet Protagoras may still say his opinion is true, as it,*
and

* Aristotle, in scorn of this position, says, in answer to it, such is the science of the senses, that, if a man only puts his finger between his eyes, and under his sight, it will be visible to him as one and two. *Metaphys. lib. 1.*

† In *Theaeteto*, vel *Dialog. de Scientia*.

‡ Sextus Empiricus's argument against Protagoras is just and in point. If, says he, it be true, that whatever a man thinks of any thing is true, it must also be so, when he thinks every, or any, opinion he has of any thing to be false. What then becomes of the first proposition? *Advers. Mathem. lib. 7. pag. 209.*

and no other, appears to him to be so.—Here you revert to the first step of the dispute, and, therefore, the question must be repeated, Is there any difference betwixt a thing appearing to be true, and a man's knowing or thinking it to be so, and what is the difference? *Protagoras only says he has the sensation of its being true.* Does he say he has the sensation, without thinking he has it? *No.* When he thinks he has it, does he know, or does he not know, that he has it? *He knows that he has it.* When any thing is known to him to exist in his sensation, does he know, or does he not know, its contrary to be, or not to be, there in the same instant? *He knows it not to be there.* If he knows that it is not in his thought, he must be sensible that he knows it not. *What then?* Observe only what is the result of the argument. *What indeed?* It is a riddle fit for the *Sphinx* to utter. Protagoras's opinion of every thing is true; and yet, from only appearing to be so to him, it may be otherwise. He thinks it to be true, while he knows not in what it differs from any thing whatever. Beyond his sensation or thought, he knows nothing to be true; and yet he knows this farther for a truth, *that he does not know*; or, in other words, he is obliged to confess, that his opinion about any thing is not to himself the measure, nor his affirmation with respect to it, the rule of all his knowledge."

Such is Plato's dialectic reasoning, in the *Theaetetus*, when it proceeded in the manner of *induction*; and which is exemplified in several other of his dialogues, especially in the *Gorgias*, *Hippias*, *Euthydemus*, and *Protagoras*, where he exposes the boasted wit, and confutes the futile assertions of the Sophists. It has been observed how properly Socrates employed this species of argument against them. It was of two kinds, one merely controversial *, or *Eristic*. When it inferred things that

* The examples of this miserable sophistry were: "Man is either an animal, or he is wood and stone; he is not the latter, for he is animated, and moves himself; and therefore he is the former. But, if an animal, he is a dog or an ox. When the question was put, Is your father the same with my father? the answer was, My father is either another father than your father, or the same. If, then, he is another than your father, as being *another*, he will not be a father; and if he be the same with my father, being the *same*, he is my father. Diogen. Laert. lib. 3. pag. 195.—6.

that had similitude, to be the same, or upon a question being put which had an alternative, the answer to it, either way, could always be rendered contradictory to itself. The other, which proceeded not by contraries, but by consequences, was admitted to be just both in rhetoric, and in the dialectic, with this distinction between them, that, in the former, it could only prove particular truths from *particulars*; but, in the latter, universal ones could be inferred from them. In rhetoric, the inquiry is not about the justice or injustice of any action, or whether, speculatively considered, it may be right or wrong, but only whether or not *such a thing was done*. The proof *, therefore, is taken from the allegation of some particular circumstance known, or discoverable, and which was most likely to have attended the action in question, if done; and it goes no farther than to establish the actual doing of it by a particular person. Thus the secret murder may be proved to be the act of him, who, soon after its perpetration, has been found lurking, and stained with blood. But the dialectic having, for its object, the discovery of speculative truths, assumes a particular one, in order to establish an *axiom*, or some general proposition. In this manner, if we inquire whether the human soul be immortal, the first question to be asked is, Can the living be from the dead? or, is it in nature that such a phenomenon takes place? In answer to this, it must be acknowledged, that, in various instances, it is proved that *contraries* are from *contraries*; so generation comes from corruption, waking from sleeping, the greater from the less; and the same truth holds conversely. Plato, therefore, taking it for an axiom, that contraries generate each other, insists upon it, in his *Phaedo*, as a conclusive argument for the immortality of the soul. It is that kind of proof adopted in the science of geometry, which often, indeed, supposes the contrary to what is implied in the proposition, and, from an inference of one thing after another, consequent to that supposition, evinces some gross absurdity to be incurred by it. Conversant as Plato was in geometry, he is reckoned to have been the first who introduced this species of reasoning into the dialectic; the parts of which laid down or illustrated by him, are reducible, *first*, to the question, What a thing is

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* Cicero de Inventione, lib. 1. pag. 67. et sequent.

in its nature or essence, and what are its accidents? and *then*, for the investigation of both, to division, definition, analysis, induction, and syllogism. His knowledge of the ten *Categories*, or of such a division of the *genera* of things, and the *modes* of *beings*, as was equivalent to that famous summary of all the conceptions of them by the human understanding, is evident from his dialectic argumentation under one or other of *these* heads, and particularly in the specimen given of it in the *Parmenides*. It is alledged that he might owe to Archytas of Tarentum the knowledge he had of the *Categories*.

The abuse of the *dialectic* by the Sophists was carried to the grossest extreme. They insisted, that contradictions might be proved by it to be consistent; and especially, that *non-entity* might be deemed to have a reality of being as well as *entity*. Hence we find, in the *Sophist* of Plato *, a piece of motley argumentation about the pretensions of a thing *that is not*, to contend for existence with *that which is*; and some of the nugatory

* In *Sophist*, vel de Ente. Amongst other frantic allegations upon this hideous topic, it was said, *that which is not*, being the contrary of *that which is*, as an *opposite*, must be *something*. Although a *negative*, it occurs to the mind as a *positive*. If it were an absolute *non entity*, it could not be expressed by any *epithet*; and yet, in arithmetic, men speak not only of one, but of many nothings. As it was an early question amongst the philosophers, what *space*, or that which is not body, but contains it, was to be reckoned, and whether it might be something or nothing? some of Plato's commentators refer the part of his *Eristic* disputations, here adverted to, about *that which is not*, and *that which is*, to that controversy, which afterwards became a celebrated one with the schoolmen. In modern metaphysics, the axiom, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, which was generally maintained amongst the ancient philosophers, has been impugned, not so much for its being contradictory to creation by *omnipotent* power, but upon the sceptical ground of our having no proper idea of power in general, or of any necessary connection betwixt a cause and its effect; unless so far as the one may be observed to follow the other. If we reason upon this topic *a priori*, and not from experience, it is said, we may conclude, that *any thing may be produced from any thing*. And why, indeed, may we not as well say from *nothing*, as from an inconceivable something, or an undetermined any thing? since, *for ought we know*, or can reason about *nothing*, it may not only have, as the *Eristics* alledged, epithets competent to it, but occult properties and powers. Hence it seems, that, to an adept in sophistry, there may be no more difficulty in conceiving bodies to be generated by space than that they are contained in it.

tory and ridiculous reasons used in the preposterous contest are specified. To stigmatise the broachers of these solecisms, under the name of *dialect* reasoning, was not the only view the philosopher had in reciting them. As there were physical philosophers, such as those already mentioned, who, maintaining the incessant fluidity of all things, expunged, upon this theory, the reality of objects, whether corporeal or incorporeal, and others, who, holding their immutability, rendered them incomprehensible, it was Plato's aim to introduce his doctrine with respect to *entity* in general, as opposed to *non-entity*, and his conception of real being as distinguishable from that which was only apparent and variable, and to support these *theses* upon the dialectical ground, which then was bestrewed with a variety of puerile conceits, and fallacies, unworthy of being called arguments. Yet, as they were imposing, and had, with many, the credit of logical acuteness, the philosopher, it seems, thought it might be a recommendation of his genius, to such judges, to play the Sophist in some of his dialogues *; and it would be a mistake to think, that the most frivolous of them were, in that age, accounted as despicable as they might afterwards appear, or as they are now justly deemed by us. Careful, however, and concerned he was, not to throw the dialectic reasoning into this illusive channel; and, therefore, as the properest guard against sophistry, he required every argument to proceed upon definitions of the terms used in it; and the rule pointed out by him for definition † has been ever since sustained by Logicians as the best general one. It prescribes, first, the ascertaining the *genus* of the thing to be defined; and then such a division to be made of that genus as may di-

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stinguish

* In proof that Plato argued sometimes *eristically*, or in the contentious manner of the orators, and sophists, for the sake of pleasing the Greeks in this false taste, the following passage may be quoted from Cicero, De Oratore, lib. 1. p. 112. Sed ego neque illis assentiebar, neque harum disputationum *inventori*, et principi, longe omnium in dicendo gravissimo, et eloquentissimo, *Platoni*; cujus, tum Athenis, diligentius legi cum Carneade, Gorgiam; quo in libro, in hoc maxime admirabor Platonem, quod mihi, in irridendis oratoribus, ipse esse summus orator videbatur: *Verbi enim contraversia jamdiu torquet Graeculos homines, contentiones cupidiores, quam veritatis.*

† Ibid. in Sophist. et in Theaeteto.

stinguish the species that may be comprehended under it. By taking the first of these, or what may be called the *specific difference*, and adding it to the genus, an adequate definition will be obtained. Thus, for instance, if a Sophist should be *metaphorically* called a *Fisher*, and we would find the definition of his employment, we must first consider what, amongst the common occupations of life, a fisher is to be reckoned. He is, in *general*, a man of craft; but his craft *differs* from that of others, as it is directed to the surprising certain animals fit to become his prey; and he exercises it not for his pleasure but his profit. Under these predicaments, a Sophist may be justly defined, one whose occupation and craft consist in ensnaring the unwary, for the sake of gain to himself.

The *analytical* method of reasoning is also used by Plato, although often not sufficiently distinguished from that of *analogy*, or of the *induction*, already explained. In the former of these, the assumption is taken from any state, or quality, in a sensible object, and applied to a mental or intelligible one. When the system of all things is held to be one, and connected, as in Plato's theory, the analogical argumentation must be admitted to be just and conclusive. Hence the ascension is made by this philosopher from sensible things to primary *intelligibles*, or ideas. Amongst the examples of the *analysis* *, more of the *inductive* than the proper kind, we may reckon that argument used by him for the soul's immortality, which is taken from its being incessantly moved. It cannot, argues he, have constant motion, and owe it to any foreign impulse, unless a progression were absurdly allowed from finite to infinite. It must, therefore, be held to be self-moved, which is the same thing with being the principle of motion. But a principle, in the nature of things, is conceived to be that which is ungenerated; and, where generation takes not place, there can be no room for corruption. It follows, then, that the human soul, possessed of motion, not derived, but of its own essence, and not as a contingent quality, but as an inherent principle, must be pronounced to be of a nature so permanent, that the attributes of incorruptibility and immortality are to be assigned to it. There is likewise another more loose mode of the inductive proof, which proceeds upon various suppositions, made one after another,

* De Legibus, lib. 10.

other, in order to consider what will follow upon each of them, and to determine in favour of that which includes some principle not assumed, but either generally admitted, or granted to be true. Plato often employs it for procuring unexceptionable definitions; and the instances of it are most remarkable in the *Theaetetus*, the *Parmenides*, and *Gorgias*.

As the dialectic, even under these prescribed rules, was apt to run into diffuse disputation, the more accurate disciples of the Socratic school saw the necessity of stating their questions and arguments in a closer form. In proportion as they aimed more at general conclusions, their propositions would be expressed in more general terms; and it would be soon perceived how, by a certain arrangement of the terms, the premises, if not denied, must necessarily lead to the conclusion. Thus was the *syllogism* introduced into the dialectic; which, from a truth *known*, infers another *not known*. In Plato, several examples are found of the *categorical* or simple, of the *hypothetical* and the *mixed* syllogism; but its precise figure in each of them is not always observed. As the *dialogue* did not well admit of this formality, it was less an object of attention. More anxious to repel the insults of the Sophists upon all just reasoning, than to prescribe to real inquirers after truth, the particular modes of argumentation, the philosopher discovers his acuteness, chiefly, in pursuing the former through all their subterfuges in disputation; and has given, in his *Euthydemus*, and some other dialogues, the proper keys for their detection.

Etymology, or the proper use of words and *syntax*, and the rhetorical art, as constituted upon these, are subjects of the dialectic *, copiously treated by this eminent instructor in its various branches. But it would be a mangling of the *Cratylus*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Gorgias*, by any one

* The dialogues of Plato have been distinguished, according to their supposed energies, first into those of the *Gymnastic* and *Agonistic* kind, and then subdivided into those called *Majeutic*, *Pyraetic*, *Endeetic*, and *Anatreptic*. The 1st, Signifies the *nursing* the dialectical student in the knowledge of his art. The 2d, The trial and exercise of his powers. The 3d, His use of demonstrative proofs. And the 4th, The subversion of the arguments of the antagonist. Diogen. Laert. lib. 3. p. 193. The number of his genuine dialogues is reckoned, in whole, to amount to fifty-six, and that of his moral epistles, which remain, to thirteen.

one not attempting a translation of these dialogues, to deliver a summary of the topics they contain. Those who are in the least acquainted with Plato's compositions, know, that, in them, he uses all the freedom of the dialogue; and that he often takes occasion, when a discourse is introduced upon any of the liberal or practical arts, or on the moral virtues, to illustrate them in such a manner, that, while he delineates the particular art, or the virtue, he unfolds or demonstrates some general truth of the intellectual, or Theological kind. This is remarkably evinced in the *Gorgias*, where the rhetorician's art is examined, and proved to be perfected, not by the best rules of elocution, or the faculty of persuasion alone, but by the orator's possessing the mastery of his passions, and, as a proficient in the moral science, capable of inspiring his hearers with the principles of it. After several comparisons of the profession with other employments, and illusions to the unworthy and venal aims of the common tribe of Rhetoricians, such transitions are made, at every new gloss of the subject, to some theory, either mythological or moral, civil or political, that few of the dialogues abound with so great a variety of instructive topics and observations. In this manner does Plato show his poetical genius in the dialogue to be comparable with that of Homer in epic composition; for, while he cannot be said to forsake his subject, or to forbear the disquisitive reasoning of a philosopher, he finds it easy, in his theory, to connect the sensible world with the intellectual, and make every hinge of his argument serve as a decent passport from the one into the other.

In the Platonic philosophy, *metaphysics* are comprehended in the dialect part; nor is the science of the former so much separated from *physics*, but that the true system * of the latter is held forth as the source of all real knowledge in metaphysics. However essential the difference be reckoned between corporeal and incorporeal *beings*; however to be discriminated matter from forms, substances from qualities or accidents, in the visible world, and in the human composition; there is surely a *link* in the chain of causes and effects, there is a *tye* of natural things, in
whatever

* Plato's disciple, Xenocrates, is alledged to have first divided the sciences into the Dialectic, Physics, and Ethics.

whatever manner it may be accounted for, which proves that these two distinguishable *beings* may, and do, consist together; and, therefore, the reasoning about the one must have a connection with that upon the other. Various and opposite have the hypotheses of philosophers been about the general system of things; especially when it was considered by them either as *one*, *essentially*, without any distinction of qualities, or as *two*, with such difference of one thing from another, that each could never exist in the same manner, and be *as one* with the other; although it was possible that certain attributes of the *one* might be communicated to the other. Amongst speculative philosophers, two have been mentioned, Parmenides and Protagoras, as holding the most contrary opinions, and the confutation of the principle of the latter has been given. Beside the gross absurdity of that of the former, which reprobated motion in the world, the hypothesis of a one *genus* of all things is unintelligible, since it contains a finite and an indefinite idea; a *genus* of one and any thing, or of a nothing known; and it can be more certainly affirmed that there are different species of things, than that they are *one-all*, undivided, and infinite. Plato, however, chose to discuss the argument with Parmenides, and his disciple Zeno, in another manner. The first he knew to have been in intimacy with the two Pythagoreans, Diogenes and Amenias; and that, having owed to the latter his conversion to the study of philosophy *, it might be presumed that he would not be altogether averse to entertain some principles of their system, which he had early learned. His theory of the *one-all*, and *immoveable*, derived from Xenophanes, required much explication; and it was not unlikely that, now in his old age, he would be disposed to give such an account of it as might correspond to that theory which Plato had framed, and which appeared to him the most plausible one for reconciling the two opposite systems, that then divided almost the whole of the philosophers about the mobility or immobility of all things in the world.

It is at least, upon such a supposition as this, about *Parmenides's* temper in philosophising, that Plato is reckoned to have composed his noted dialogue of that name, in which he introduces Socrates, then young, commencing

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. pag. 560.

commencing the dispute about *ideas*, with Zeno and Parmenides. After being for a while maintained between the first and the second, it concludes with a most subtle and elaborate deduction of the conceptions of the last of them upon the intricate subject; but in such a manner as was agreeable to Plato's theory about the existence and nature of *ideas*.

“But, without impugning the inference made by you *,” said Socrates to Zeno, “I would put a question upon it. Things, you say, cannot be like and unlike, when they participate of one *ens*; yet, may it not be conceived that there are certain *species* of things, or *ideas* of likeness and unlikeness, *apart* from the things themselves, in which I and you, or any two persons, participate, and, therefore, agree in calling some things like, and others unlike, or saying, that they are similar to one another, or dissimilar, according to this common and participated *idea*; and, consequently, that things are to be accounted not one alone, but divers, and many also? Argumentation only trifles, when a supposition is so framed, that *genus* and *species* not being distinguished, it infers, that no difference can be made in things, and that, being in one state, they cannot move, being like one another, or unlike, neither of these conditions is convertible into its opposite. No one admires his ingenuity in reasoning, who undertakes, in sensible things, to prove himself to be one, and many; supposing his head to be one thing, his feet another, and his hand a third; and yet he, participating in these many, to be one person. But, if he should affirm that one is many, or, as has been already stated, that likeness and unlikeness, one and multitude, state and motion, when taken for separate species, or *ideas* distinct from one another, and still offer to prove them to be one, such an argument, if it could be formed, would be curious indeed, and deserve admiration. You, Zeno, I should wish to make trial of that dialectic acuteness, for which you are famed, upon this state of the question.” After some pause in the discourse, Parmenides said, “It appears that you would have us understand that *ideas*, which are incorporeal species of things, may be considered in three several shapes; as they are *apart* by themselves; and, also, as they exist in the things which participate of them; and
you

* Plato in Parmenide, vel de uno rerum omnium principio, vel de Ideis:

you seem to intimate, that their similitudes or images, participated of by us, are another distinct state of them; and, under these predicaments, you presume it may follow, that they are *one*, and many." "It is my meaning," replied Socrates. "You must then suppose that there is one differential, and specific idea of what is good, and what is just, and what is honest, and of other things of that nature." "I think it conceivable," said Socrates. "Do you imagine the same with respect to sensible things as of man; for instance, that, beside the perception of this or that particular man, there is what may be expressed by the term *homoniety*, or an *idea* of man in general; and so, likewise, of fire and water? and, descending lower still, it may be asked, if it obtains in mud, and straws, and grubs *, and such minutiae of nature?" "About the latter," answered Socrates, "there is a difficulty; but I pretend not to reply to every objection, and wish rather to hear your reasoning on the general question."

"It is involved in much perplexity," said Parmenides, "and you are yet too young in philosophy to be aware of all the contradictions attending such an hypothesis. For, let me ask you, Does not every thing that participates of species do so, either in part or in whole; or, is there any other mode of its participation?" "There is no other," answered Socrates; "yet why, in the present question, may it not be imagined that the participation is of one whole?" And thus," answered Parmenides, "you would have one and the same thing, existing separately in several things, to be no more than one in them all; contrary to every arithmetical or geometrical idea." "Not so contradictory as you apprehend it," said Socrates, "is my notion; since, at least, it may be represented by the conception we have of one and the same *day*; which, although no more than one in existence, is yet, as such, present, in every instant of time, with many things, and still is not conceived to be divided from

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itself,

* It appears not only from this allowed difficulty, but from the general strain of the dialogue, that Plato was well aware of some unanswerable objections that might be made to his strange theory of ideas; and, therefore, he, at first, delivers it, not so much as having the evidence of truth, but as what might afford grounds of curious and plausible reasoning. It must be added, indeed, that, as he had the view of making it a part of his system, he tries all his dialectic subtilty in its support, and hides, often, the fallacy of it, by a dexterous and inimitable acceleration of his argument.

itself, or reduced to any partition of its unity." "It is but a slender covering for a contradiction which you have hit upon," answered Parmenides; "and you must be sensible that it will never bear either a physical or dialectic examination." Socrates having then asked, in what way it was possible that species of things, or ideas, could be participated of in the shape of *one* by many, if it were not either by wholes or by parts, a subtle discussion ensues of the intricate point; which, without attempting to copy the almost inexplicable strain of the dialogue, may, perhaps, be rendered intelligible, from the following view of Plato's theory of ideas, collected not from the *Parmenides* only, but from other passages of his works that serve to exhibit it.

Manifest it is, from the clearest reason, that we see, hear, and feel, not *in*, but *by* the ministry of the corporeal organs; and that the ability of distinguishing what is seen, what is heard, and what is felt, depends upon a faculty superior to the senses *, and that nothing is comprehensible to us as one, or the same, equal or unequal, like or unlike, but in consequence of the power of the mind to conceive it under one distinct idea. This conception of a thing in the form of a specific idea, as much proves the separate existence of ideas, or incorporeal species of being, or essences, as the notice we have from the senses about external objects affords an evidence of their *entity*. A just physical † theory, therefore, may resolve the principles of the universe into three, *Deity*, *matter*, and *forms* of things, which may be called *ideas*. The latter are the *exemplars*, after which all things were made in the visible world. Ever existing, they are immutable and permanent in their nature; while all corporeal things, constituted of matter, and of their signatures, are unstable, and in perpetual mutation. They are, in respect of the rational souls of men, *primary intelligibles*; but superior beings can only contemplate them in their essential forms. The common notions which men have of things ‡ from their sensations, or from the images of them in the *phantasia*, are not ideas, but various, unconnected, and transient perceptions of singulars. Upon them, no certain knowledge can be founded, no science built, no demonstration formed. Hints only, and
inlets

* Plato in Theaeteto, vel de Scientia.
Platonis, lib. 1. Plato in Parmenide.

† Apuleius de dogmate
‡ In Sophisto, vel de ente.

inlets they are, to those scientific attainments which arise from the capacity of the human mind to conceive, and to contemplate things, as they are constituted in the order of nature, which has made singulars reducible to certain species, or combinations of them, while the latter, upon a proper investigation, may be pronounced to be, at the same time, *one* and *many*.

True philosophy must ever reject, as contradictory to common reason, the hypothesis, that all things are of one nature, or kind of being *, and that body differs not essentially from soul, and matter from form, or mind. Nor are those philosophers to be admired for their penetration, who, admitting a distinction of the *genus* of things, maintain that the whole subsist under one condition; either that of state or of motion. Did they, instead of advancing, as some of them do, that the universe is alternately made consistent with itself, and *one* by concord; and many, and different things, by discord, say only what is more intelligible; that the two conditions of state and motion are found in it; and then consider what beings are the uniform and permanent, and what the multifarious and changeable, they would probably form a juster theory, if they did not arrive at the truth. They might, perhaps, learn not only to distinguish the different attributes of corporeal and incorporeal natures, but how they may, in the case of our perceptions, improperly called *ideas*, be so combined, that the seemingly contradictory proposition of a one and many, in the same thing, may be affirmed. Every thing in nature that is one hath a particular essence, but not in itself, as a singular, but only in connection with its class of incorporeal and specific forms †. The sight and perception of a man, a tree, or a mineral, is no more than the sensible exhibition of an intelligible idea, which is itself an essence, independent of any individual of them; and, unless it were such, every man's mutable or different perception of the same thing might be deemed its specific form, that may exist, or not exist, according to his pleasure. But natural reason reprobates this confusion, and the mind, in every inquiry into the nature and qualities of objects, endeavours to arrange its perceptions of them under certain general

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* In Sophista, vel de ente.

† In Parmenide.

heads, whence may be formed a distinctive notion of them; and it has ground to infer that this conceived notion may be true, and, according to the real nature of things, not relatively alone, and from its appearing so, but because it has, in the universe, its intelligible form, which is reflected to us, although imperfectly, through the medium of sensible and particular objects. The specific idea, therefore, is to be conceived as *a one* whole, in and by itself, and, at the same time, as the foundation and cause of the subsistence of the many *singulars* comprehended under it. It both combines, and makes a difference, amongst the classes of beings that have essence only in communication with it. The ideal form is one thing, and the individuals it contains, another, but, taken together, (and separated altogether, in nature, they cannot be), they may properly be pronounced to be *one* and *many*: For, what is unity in the *species* is multitude in the *singulars*; what is identity in the one, is diversity in the other; and what is state in the former is motion in the latter *. These are different properties, which distinguish intelligible things from sensible, real, and permanent essences from the imaginary and transient, and the intellectual world from the corporeal. To be at one, and to stand, is competent to the first; to be never the same, but to flow, is the characteristic of the second. All human science depends on the recognition of the existence and operation of both these kinds of *beings* in the world. It cannot take knowledge of the indefinite number, or what may be called the infinity of singulars, unless so far as they may be reduced to conceptions of *species*, under several *ties* of a *one* being, or nature, which render them intelligible, by their having similarity, or dissimilarity †. Neither is *one*, abstractly conceived, and without being supposed to be the foundation, and to have the power of number, the object of science. *Unite* is not multiplied, nor added to, from itself, but receives augmentation by being joined with *another*, and not the same, unite. By combination with this other, the perception of an equal number is obtained; and *equality* appears to be the result of identity and diversity. Ideas, therefore, under the description of them that has been given, may be reckoned to operate, in regard to human science,

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* In *Sophista*.† In *Parmenide*.

as *contraries* are allowed by philosophers to do, in natural things. By the combination of two opposite elements, a *third* is produced, which, although participating of both, discovers the predominant power of one; for, if they were supposed to be of equal power, they would destroy each other, and nothing could be generated from them. Still, it must be confessed, that ideal forms are only *, after a manner, represented to human minds, by faint likenesses of them: So the images of bodies are seen in water, or in different mirrors. But, as mathematical lines, and figures, and arithmetical numerations, transcend bodies, and exhibit a kind of science detached from them, so the intelligent power of the mind, when duly exercised, rises to higher conceptions, and such as, if not adequate, are yet analogous to the incorporeal, and unchangeable forms of things. These abstract speculations are therefore to be cultivated as the best preparatives to the science of *universals*, which resembles the knowledge of ideas, the only invariable exemplars of truth.

The conceptions of one and another, identity and diversity, state and motion, are not varied in the human mind, but always presented to it † in the same light. Neither does it err in referring like things to likeness, as their source; what appears good to goodness; fair to pulchritude; useful to utility; and so, also, it may be said of their contraries. As types of unchangeable ideas, they are the foundations of science, and demonstrable truths. But it is otherwise with the perceptions arising from the co-operation of the external senses, and the memory. The verity or falsity of what is apprehended, then depends upon the exactness of the picture taken into the imagination, which, from negligence or confusion, may sometimes adopt an erroneous one, or the memory may fail in recollecting the first communicated, and juster image. Thus, a person having only slightly observed the countenance and gesture of Socrates, may, on meeting with Plato, imagine, from some fancied likeness between them, that he beheld the master, and not the disciple. Evident it is, from instances of this kind, that a measure of deception attends our passive and less intelligent faculties; such as those of the senses,

* In Theaeteto, et in Dialog. de Republica, lib. 7.
Diogen. Laert. lib. 3 pag. 173.

† In Theaeteto.

ses, imagination, and memory. When under the correction of *common sense*, born with men, they can produce no more than true *opinion*, always to be distinguished from the superior reach of the dialectic, or *scientific reason*. Rational judgment is the first opening of the mind to it; but, being conversant with sensible things, or those of a mixed nature, it cannot obtain the denomination of *intellectual* knowledge, and only can have that of *natural understanding*, not without the intervention of *sense*. Pure intellect, indeed *, is only competent to the unembodied state of the soul; which, as has been observed, not only understands that she *knows some thing*, but also, that *she does not know others*, and, therefore, must be supposed, either, from her constitution, incapable of apprehending them, or, from her present condition, under an *oblivion* with respect to them. Yet, that the human soul hath a *wing* of knowledge, which may be called *reminiscence*, superior to memory, appears evident from what is performed by her, when recollected, and in *discourse* with herself. The imagination may be compared to a waxen tablet, passive altogether to the figures imprinted upon it. The images and notions of things, collected from sense and memory, in the *phantasia*, are but like unconnected lines, and figures, traced out for the soul's inspection, which avails to convert them into an intelligible character. She comprehends the reformation of them she has made, and recognises her faculty in it, not as a new acquisition, or as derived from the perceptions of the senses, but as an original one possessed by her, and almost suppressed; until recollected, and revived by palpable memorials of abstract and intellectual knowledge, found within herself.

In connection with what Plato delivers about the *reminiscence* of the human soul, we may here introduce some of his arguments for proving its immortality. The proof of it, taken from the soul being the principle of motion, has been mentioned; and that which holds forth the Pythagorean doctrine of its pre-existence to the body, more properly coincides with his *physical* theory. But there are arguments of the dialectic kind, insisted upon in his *Phaedrus* and *Phaedo*, and other dialogues, which deserve attention.

That

* Ibid in Theaetet.

That life should be from death, as death comes from precedent life, is no inconsistency, either in reason or in nature. *Contraries*, which have no *medium*, are justly assumed, in human apprehension, to be generable from each other; for no reason can ever be assigned, why the one should be reckoned to pre-exist, or to be subsequent to the other. Light and darkness, weak and strong, hot and cold, and the vigilant or dormant state of any creature, are repugnancies, which exist not at once, and in the same subject, but any supposed alteration of one of them implies the intervention of the other. Hence, in the corporeal world, natural generations appear to take place, in the way of constant and perpetual rotation, either from a composition of their parts to their dissolution, or from this to that of their temporary combinations. This vicissitude is not only seen in mineral bodies, and in vegetables, but also in some creatures, having apparent life, which seem to die, only in order to be revived. If it were otherwise appointed, and the course of nature had an unsurmountable boundary, if her exertions were confined to one tenor, issuing in a termination that had no *recourse*, it would be highly credible that all things were subjected to one action, and one passion, and that the one was finally, and forever, to be concluded in the other. *Endymion*, once fallen asleep, as the poets feign, could never awake, or the primitive huddle of nature into one confused chaos, or *dormitory*, might be verified. But this hypothesis is reprobated by all things that we see in nature, which exhibits, incessantly, a circuit of action, a passage from motion suspended to motion renewed, and from debility to vigour, or else in the contrary career. Is, then, the human constitution, or the soul, which is the active principle in it, to be looked upon as an exception to the general rule of procedure that universally obtains in nature, of which it is a part? Or, are we to imagine that nature here alone fails, and wants the power to renovate this portion of her works? The presumption lies strongly on the other side of the question; and it may well be inferred, that the soul becomes not quiescent in the death of the body, but that, having in herself the power of animation, she loses it not, but continues to exert it in some new corporeal form.

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Yet, why may not the human soul, although a distinct essence from the body, be worn out with action, and, after various transitions from one corporeal vehicle to another, at length be dissolved, and vanish into air? In reply to this question, it is to be considered, what is meant by dissolution, and whether it can be understood to be that kind of passion which the soul may be supposed to undergo. When we say of a thing, that it can be dissolved, it is conceived to be not a simple essence, but one compounded of parts, separable from one another; and that, in consequence of this separability of its parts, it may lose the consistency of its form, and be reduced either into a different one, or into a variety of concretions and figures. But, how does it appear that the soul's essence consists in any composition of parts? There is nothing more evident about this internal principle, than that its rational thoughts and conceptions are not divisible into parts, and that the supposition of it implies the greatest absurdity *. Partaking of intellect, its essence must be conceived to be congenial to that of things incorporeal and intellectual; to ideas that are one, and indivisible and immutable, and, therefore, everlasting. But, may not its essence consist in a harmony supported upon its connection with the body, and, therefore, ceasing with it? This allegation excludes its pre-existence, which is probable; but, considered without regard to that probability, it may be proved in itself to be absurd. Every kind of harmony, whether that of artificial sounds, or of voices, or of words, or of all these taken together, is still resolvable into its constituent parts, and can rise to no other species of it than what they are capable, jointly, to produce. But, into what concords of the bodily senses, of seeing, hearing, touching, and tasting, is it possible to trace the rational faculties of the human soul; which perceives and contemplates objects of a nature entirely different from them? It may be further asked, Why, if in native congeniality with the body, it should at all appear adverse to bodily affections, and, instead of corresponding with, be often observed to oppose and to controul them: It urges, occasionally, the enduring of thirst and hunger, severe exercises, and the hardest discipline; and, as Homer justly represents
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* In Dialog. de Republica, lib. 10.

his hero in soliloquy, it rouses itself to fortitude in maintaining such opposition. "Bear, yet, this grief, *my heart*," says Ulysses, "for a heavier thou hast known." This speech would be ridiculous if the soul's chief qualification was to harmonise with the bodily appetites; and, if its essence were not evinced to be something more divine than harmony itself; a principle possessed of intelligence in itself, and qualified to have the command of the corporeal nature, and to act in imitation of celestial beings, disengaged from its thralldom.

What less than immortal duration can be ascribed to the soul, which, to every thing that receives it, is the principle of life? It cannot be where death is; no more than equality can consist with inequality, straight with crooked *, hot with cold. For, it is to be observed, that the argument of contraries being generated from contraries, would here be erroneously applied. The question is not, whether opposites in nature, such as generation and corruption, may alternately arise from each other; but whether, as convertible conceptions, the one may be substituted in place of the other, or, both being supposed the same ideal species, they may co-exist in one subject at the same time? We say not of the contrary elements † of fire and snow, heat and cold, that they have a common essence, and are generated together; but only, that they may be successively produced. Their opposite natures are considered as irreconcilable with each other; and that, where one of them intervenes, the other is reckoned either to perish or to fly off. Such is the theory to be held with respect to the human soul; which, as the principle of animation to body can never alter, or be converted into its contrary, or that which is void of life. In the disease and death of the body, it becomes not corruptible and mortal; but, preserving its species, and withdrawing from its contrary, it remains entire, and unhurt, in every corporeal change.

Whatever perishes in nature, is destroyed, not by a foreign, or adventitious evil, but by an intrinsic one of its own ‡, or its particular defects. The source of the evil must be found in the thing itself. So we

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* In Phaedone.

† In Philebo, vel de Summo Bono.

‡ In Dialog. de Repub. lib. 17.

may observe corruptions to take place in natural bodies, which are, from their heterogeneous, or weak constitution, liable to decay. But what can we reckon that inherent evil, or imbecillity, to be, which is sufficient to destroy the soul? No tearing asunder, no torturing, such as brings death to the body, can operate upon its essence; and, although it be granted that vitious passions are its bane, they cannot be deemed its natural, but its moral destroyers. The soul which is inflamed by them, must be owned to be still, wickedly, alive: And well it would be for mankind, if, in proportion to the rage of the immoral and violent passions in any one, his soul's energy was found to be impaired, and to be precipitated into natural destruction. But experience proves that this does not hold; and that the sufferings of the soul are not of the kind that can affect its *being* or essence, but such as are exterior to it, and which arise from its unhappy condition in the body. In this respect, indeed, its case may be said to resemble that of the *marine* Glaucus, who, according to the poets, being sunk into the grottos of the sea, has his former manly figure and shape almost wholly reversed, by sands, and weeds, and shells, encrusting him around. Yet, viewed in the light in which the study and love of philosophy places the human soul, it appears to emerge from its disadvantageous circumstances, and to give palpable indications of its affinity to a superior nature, and more exalted sphere of intelligence, and suitable action. Even here, in the investigation of truth, and in the keen exercise * of its reasoning faculty, it seems to approach to that retreat from the body, for which it is natively qualified. Insensible, then, to the solicitations of the bodily senses, it is altogether alive to its rational conceptions, and surveys with delight every discovery it makes of what is true, or what is good, as an anticipation of its future attainments in the knowledge of both; when the body, and its affections, shall form no impediment to its progression.

Philosophers have therefore justly concluded death to be the migration of the soul from the body; and that their studies in life should be directed to render it as pure and uncontaminated with corporeal passion as possible, and such as is consonant to the nature, and divine qualities of

* In Phaedone.

of the soul. A studied purification of the mind, from the contagions of the animal life, happily supported on the principles of true philosophy, is to be regarded as the commencement of the life of the gods, which is an immortal one. Its adepts may be said to be initiated in their mysteries, and to live already with them. In reason, therefore, they may be presumed at death to go to the region of the intelligent, and the good, whom they resemble, and to dwell with them in a state exempted from earthly perturbations, and adapted to that mental tranquillity, and contemplation, after which they have so eagerly aspired. But there, the souls distracted * with sensual passions, cannot arrive, but remain, according to the common opinion of men, hovering about the tombs and sepulchres; and they may, indeed, be supposed to undergo a long course of transmigration from body to body, until their purification be fully accomplished. Acknowledged it must be, that what philosophers have imagined about the state of disembodied souls, can be no more relied upon as a certainty than the fictions of the poets. But the agreement of both in the persuasion of their immortality, and the constant tradition of it in every age, and nation, must be admitted as a signal testimony in behalf of a truth, naturally cherished in the human mind, desirable to all men, and formidable to none but the depraved and vicious, who require, and ought to suffer such a check as the consideration of it affords.

We shall now conclude the dialectic and metaphysical part of Plato's philosophy, with tracing the notions of *deity*, and the divine perfections, expressed by him; the understanding of which has occasioned disputations amongst the learned; according to their different interpretations of his meaning in some obscure passages of his works.

Upon the subject of the intellectual world, neither philosopher nor poet can use proper †, or adequate language. If there be names ‡ expressive of the real nature and essences of things, they can be found only amongst the gods. But what appellation is competent to the *one*

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* Ibid. in fine; et in Phaedro, vel de Pulchro.
in Crotulo.

Maximus Tyrius, Dissert. 1.

† In Phaedro, et
‡ De Legibus, lib. 10. Cicero de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

being, which is too perfect to be genus, or species, or difference; and, therefore, it is hardly permitted to men to pronounce *what he is*, who is above essence. In an absolute sense, it can never be done. Yet those are not to be imitated *, but rather condemned, who infer that the human mind is not to be turned to the study of his conceivable and relative excellencies. Without some conception of the *one* eternal and immoveable principle, the cause of other principles, and the original mover of what may be moved; all things, according to Protagoras's doctrine, may be reckoned to flow on, incoherently, and no consistency be found any where, either in the intellectual, or in the visible world. Order and beauty, rule and government, would be universally obliterated, and no more to be traced in the celestial spheres, than in the transient dreams of men; or else we must adopt the gross and incomprehensible notion of Euthydemus, and say, that all things are of one nature, and in one condition, and that there is no diversity of being, power, or agency, in the world. The one supposition admits no reality, but that of the perpetual motion of all things, and the other only holds forth that of a one invariable state of them. By the first, they are not a whole; by the second, they are a whole immeasurable †. But, as it is apparent to our bodily eyes, and other senses, that corporeal things are diversified, and mutable in their shapes and motions, so also the mind perceives, that they are reducible to distinct forms, and hence rendered susceptible of mensuration, and intelligible. This is a mental conception, with only the hint of it borrowed from external objects. A recognisance follows it, that these forms of being are not imaginary only, but realised in ideas incorporeal; which constitute the measures of things, otherwise incomprehensible. In the system of them, although many, a one is always predominant; which marks their sameness and state. The foundation, therefore, of whatever is intelligible, and true, being placed in the domination of *one*, the original of all ideas must be found in a *one* existent being, whose eternal idea is the source and the archetype of them all ‡. This is deity; who, true in himself, has put the stamp

* De Legibus, lib. 7.

† Plato de Repub. lib. 6.

‡ Ibid. lib. 6. ad fin.

stamp of truth, not on fleeting corporeals, but upon real essences; and hence both the power of knowledge which human souls, and other intelligent beings have, and the reality of what is known by them, are ultimately referable to him.

Views of being in general, and especially the knowledge of the *one existent*, beyond essence, are only attainable by the mind abstracting its contemplations from every picture, or image of what is corporeal or sensible. Even those may fall short of this knowledge who investigate him, from attention to the progressive scale of beings, and joining together in their conceptions, whatever is beautiful, intelligent, and wise, in their frames, regard him as the consummation of them all *; if he is imagined by them to be a composition of powers and qualities. He is one uncompounded, and principally discoverable to men under one idea, which is that of the *good*; or the cause not only of intelligence but of being, essence, enjoyment, and pleasure, to all the constituents of the intellectual world, and to the inferior order of rational souls, animating bodies here below. The fecundity of this perfection, exemplified in his influence and agency in the universe, is to be taken in strict consistency with his indivisible unity; and, therefore, when we denominate him the *fair*, and good, and connect wisdom with beneficence, we express one perfection implied in another. For, to be beneficent, there must be knowledge.

True, indeed, it is, that we participate immediately, not of the good himself, but of what is generated by him, of that offspring, or *son* of his, as we may call the world, which bears his image. Human sight is not in the sun, nor yet the sun in the eye that sees, but only the emanation of light from him †. So we may conceive the influence of this offspring of the good to be diffused throughout the whole intellectual world, like the solar rays in the visible one. Every eye that feels them turns to the sun, the dispenser of light; and a similar motion and propensity is found in the intelligent soul to discover and contemplate the source of all its knowledge; who, since he is the cause that other beings understand, cannot himself be indiscoverable by them.

Yet,

* De Repub. lib. 6. ad fin.

† Ibid.

Yet, what gross absurdities have the poets, those great dealers in sensible imagery, propagated about the *gods*; and, how have even the most admired of them perverted every rational conception of the *divinity* *? So illiberally have Homer and Hesiod aspersed, and belied the father of the gods and men, that hardly the vestige of a godlike character is left to him. According to their theology, Olympus, the mansion of the celestials, is often disturbed with the quarrels and contests of the deities, who are represented as acting towards one another, and to mankind, with caprice, envy, and dissimulation. In distributing the lots of human life, Jove is said to be provided with two coffers; one, the repository of good, the other of ill; and, although he generally makes nearly an equal mixture of them, yet, at times, he is so inconsiderate, or unmerciful, as to assign to some an entire portion of evil unmixed. Nothing is more repugnant to all our rational conceptions of the nature and actions of deities, than such fictions concerning them. That which is good in itself is never hurtful; and the more perfect, in felicity of nature, any being is, the more he enjoys of what is agreeable and excellent, the more undisturbed possession he hath of wisdom and power, ability and strength, the farther is he removed from any disposition to evil, or the production of that which would infer a change in his state, or the desire of something contrary to it. Therefore deity, who is the good, cannot be deemed the cause of evil in the world; but, as beneficent, he is the producer of felicity. Whatever evils are experienced amongst mankind must be attributed to another source; the investigation of which may be comprehended in the physical part of philosophy.

Mutability is competent to an infirm or wrong state of being; and not to that which is sufficient and right. The works of nature, or of art, which have the most soundness and strength in their fabric, are the least liable to variation in themselves, or to be altered by external accidents. *God*, and all things which we call divine, are in the best state; and, therefore, they are removed from change. To fancy, with the poets, that the deities assume visible and particular shapes, and this, too, in order to terrify, to delude, or to impose upon mankind, is impious, and

* De Legibus, lib. 2.

and such theology as all rational minds ought to reprobate; and what, in regard to their morals, the vulgar should never learn, or hear, even in the way of fables, either in verse or in prose. It is the property of every divinity to have one simple and uncompounded nature, without duplicity either of form, or other quality. Deity, therefore, is not fallacious, but true. He deceives not; nor suffers deception. By false visions, or ambiguous significations of his will, he misleads not; and, as he cannot mistake from ignorance of what is true, so he finds no inducement or occasion, as may happen to men, to use fallacy or dissimulation.

If, in connection with these abstract views of deity, we proceed to a physical theory of the world, it may receive a better illustration than what Archelaus, or even Anaxagoras, has produced. Attempting, both of them, to trace a process of nature, without admitting an original and efficient principle to be the cause of what is wisely, or benignantly done in nature, they have neither delivered a system that can be understood, nor furnished a sufficient reason why we should affirm that one thing is made correspondent to another, or intended to answer a particular end. When physics have been thus divested of every recommendation to study them, it is time to relinquish the Ionian school, and the vague theories of the Greeks in general. We must inquire what the philosophers of other nations have advanced about the origin and constitution of the world. Some theory of it may be found amongst them, which, if not entirely complete and satisfactory, may yet be consistent and probable; and, without pretending to demonstrative evidence, prove no inconsiderable enlargement of our knowledge.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Introduction to Plato's Physical Philosophy.—Reprobation of a Fortuitous Cosmogony, or by Combinations of the Natural Elements.—Soul, and not Body, the Principle of Motion.—Theory of Motion, as diversified in the Sublunary and Celestial Regions.—The World Generated, and not Eternal.—Its Origin and Constitution, according to the Traditional Theory of Timæus Locrius.

SOME men there are, and these too ranked amongst the philosophers and the wise, who assert, that all things which are, which have been, or shall be, owe their origin either to nature, or to fortune, or to art. The greatest and most splendid productions, they ascribe to the two former of these causes, and the lesser to the last *. Thus, say they, the elements of fire, water, earth, air, and all bodies which are compounds of them, the sun, the moon, and the stars, have their efficient causes in nature and fortune; which principles, although destitute of soul, or mind, by a happy chance, combine cold things with hot, humid with dry, hard with soft, and, in general, contraries with contraries, in such a manner, that a contemperament of the whole is the result. The circular expansion of the heavens, and whatsoever it contains; the animals and the vegetables of the earth; the regular seasons of the year; require, according to them, no intelligent principle, no deity, either for their being or their arrangement. Nature and fortune, working together,
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* Dialog. de Legibus, lib. 10.

are held to be sufficient for both these effects: Yet, art and design are allowed by them to be essential to the exhibition of works that fall within the reach of human abilities, but which bear no proportion to the dignity and beauty of those beheld in the system of the world. Painting, music, and other such arts, although imitations only of natural things, are admired as wonderful proofs of human wit and invention. Even medicine, agriculture, and the gymnastic arts, that are not exercised but in communication with nature, are placed to the account of intelligence and wisdom in man. The sum of it is arrogantly swelled by referring all political science, the device of laws, and the institution of civil government, not to certain propensities and principles found in the human breast, or to hints taken from what is seen in nature, but solely to the study and artful contrivance of men, who, therefore, vary them according to their pleasure. They add, that the opinions framed and propagated about the gods have no other source or authority; and are to be considered as suggested from political considerations, and supported upon credulity and prejudices, easily communicated to the generality of mankind.

To hear such glaring falsehoods uttered by men, in the face of that wise constitution of the world, which barbarians as well as Greeks acknowledge and revere, and the benign influence of which they themselves must feel, in the grateful vicissitudes of day and night, and the no less pleasing than admirable oeconomy of all things around them, may well excite the indignation of the rational and considerate part of the human species. But it becomes us not, says the philosopher, to be in anger, because their minds are perverted, and, unhappily, to that degree, as to call in question the truth of what has obtained the consent of all nations, that there are *beings divine* as well as human, gods as well as men. It may belong to the legislature to prescribe suitable restraints to the communication of these pernicious errors. Yet the language of the philosopher, to such as are addicted to them, must be dispassionate and cool, more especially when directed to youthful minds, whose taints of impiety are rarely permanent. An admonition, such as the following one, should be given them: "You are yet only in the first experiment of your rational faculties. - It is beyond a doubt, that, in the progression

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of time and experience, you will come to think differently, in many points, from what your present observations may suggest. The subject under consideration is of far more moment, than, as now, it may appear to you; if, indeed, it be a truth proved from numerous examples, that, by entertaining just sentiments of the gods, men are disposed to act in a more virtuous and laudable manner. *Wait*, therefore, you ought; and we entreat you to *wait*, for the requisite aid which more mature reflection will afford; before you decide upon a question that must affect the whole tenor of your lives. Notwithstanding the pride you may assume to yourselves, from espousing these opinions as deep and singular discoveries, we will not dissemble with you; they cannot be reckoned either profound or new. Others have gone before you, and your associates, in the tract of them; and some few, or more, may be found, in every age, inclined to them. To none of them, however, whom we have known, has it happened to carry along with them the same convictions of their truth, from youth to riper years. Differing, frequently, from themselves, they could less keep pace with one another. They have halted, some at one stage of their doubt, about the being of the gods, and a divine superintendence of human affairs, and others at another. To whatever cause or motive this fluctuation of their opinions may be ascribed, the doctrine to be inferred from it is obvious. Let no speculatist of this kind be presumptuous or precipitant; let him be sure that he has collected all the powers of his reason, and has exercised them, free from prepossession or bias, previously to his determining upon what he is to adopt as his fixed and invariable judgment."

If we understand these theorists aright, who say that fire, earth, air, and water, are the principles of all things, and that their compositions, and decompositions, constitute what they call *nature*, their meaning must be, that these elementary bodies are prior in existence to what is distinguishable from them, and is known by the name of *soul*, or *mind*. This is, undeniably, their position, if they alledge that life, sense, perception, thought, and will, which characterise the latter principle, are no more than a certain mechanical disposition of the former; and they indeed attempt to account for them only in this way. But this tenet, implied in their theory, appears to be demonstrably false; since it may be proved, that
soul,

soul, and not body, is the principle of all motion ; without which, generations, or changes, could not take place in the corporeal world *. Of matter, or body, our only conception is, that it is something extended, and therefore visible, and what may be touched, and therefore capable of being impelled extraneously ; and, when any of its parts are moved, that they may move others. As a moveable, it may be reckoned susceptible of seven distinct motions ; to any one of which, more than to another, it cannot be said to be, of itself, inclined, or directed. Being equally indifferent to them all, it must, therefore, remain at rest ; unless something adventitious afford it impulse and direction. Matter, then, which cannot be proved to have self-motion, without a particular mode of it, or, having different or contrary tendencies at the same time, can never be the principle of things variously moved and generated as they are in the world. But *that* which we only know to have self-motion as its essential property, and also the power of moving other things, is soul. Nothing, therefore, but this principle can be supposed to have begun motion in matter, and communicated such degrees and modes of it, as might conduce to the formation of the elementary substances that have been mentioned ; and, through their mixture, or transmutation, to that of other more compounded ones. Thus the conclusion must be, that soul is a principle in the world antecedent to body ; which could not be formed without its motive power and intervention. Hence, also, it follows as a corollary, that all the innate properties and attributes of soul, considered as pure soul, its thoughts, reminiscences, volitions, and moral affections, are under the same predicament, and prior to the primary ones of body, its lengths, breadths, depths, or solidity. In nature, likewise, as in reason, it is evinced, that the activity of the former gives the law to the inert and passive disposition of the latter. The corporeal forms would, for ever, roll on, promiscuous and variable, without consistency in the particulars, or conformity in the whole, were not these determined by the sway of a soul energetic and intelligent, which agitates the heavens as well as the earth, and gives speciality to the motions visible in them.

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* In Legibus, ibid. ; et in Timæo, et Epinomide.

In these two regions of the world, it must be confessed, that the diversity of the movements is most remarkable; to such a degree, indeed, that it may be asked, Is it one soul, or more than one, that presides in them? or, can the same informing principle be reckoned to differ from itself in its energy and operations? The question is not easy to be resolved. It must be remembered, that what we advance about the intellectual world is still under the caution, that we should have a diffidence of our conceptions, as inadequate to the object; and, therefore, apt to fail, or to mislead us. Yet, to account for the apparent diversity of the animation, and arrangement of the celestial and sublunary worlds, may we not say, that soul, imparted by him who framed them, as a common principle to both, must, of necessity, vary in its agency, when conjoined with things so different in their nature as those which are uniform, and stable, and those which are divers, and changeable. Such contrariety evidently obtains in the heavenly and in the earthly motions. The former are governed by one law, which is that of the circular motion; the latter, as if under no regulation, discover, even in their elements, a repugnancy to union; and the soul that animates fire, water, earth, and air, appears always to run into incongruities, or, as we may express it, to *madden* in their various compositions, and transmutations. We can form no clearer notion of what we call a state of some things, and a diversity in others, than by considering the peculiar propriety of the circular motion, compared with all other modes of it. Whatever is so moved, changes not its centre of motion. Although its parts pass through several spaces, they, together with the whole, always bear the same proportion to it; and uniformly return, as it were into themselves. This may be deemed the properest image of the action of intellect, and of the stated order and consistency that prevails in the spheres of pure intelligences, or in the fixed stars; whose essences are in conformity with one intelligent soul, or informing principle. But in the region of the planets, and in the sublunary world, the case is not the same. There, the elements are not of equal capacity and temperament. The animating principle has not, therefore, the same exertion. It forms not a common centre to things of a heterogeneous kind; but, according as
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they alter their place, so their centres of motion are changed *. Hence, even the sun, moon, and the five planets, although chiefly fiery substances, and nearly congenial to the celestial ones, are moved in particular orbs by themselves, and in directions contrary to the circumvolutions of the stars. Every one of them may be presumed to be ruled by some divine intelligences; so that *all things may be said to be replenished with divinities*. Yet, through all these powers of motion, animation, and intelligence, the efficiency of the *one* is manifested; both in the general order, and in the particular positions of the works that are made.

There is no part, not even the least, of these works, that does not occupy that rank and place which is adapted to its nature and qualities †. Whether that part acts, or is acted upon, it is apparent that *God* has wisely disposed of its action and passion. The parts, it is true, are formed with a reference to the whole; and not the whole with a respect to the parts. No intelligent architect, or master in any rational art, ever proceeded by a different rule; and yet he is not judged, from its observance, to have contemned or neglected the parts. On the contrary, his attention to their just proportions is the more evinced by it; and their fitness, their beauty, and utility, are proved to be calculated upon a scale of the greatest magnitude. “The universe, indeed, of which thou, O man, art a single part, was not constituted for thy sake; but thou wast produced as an appendage of it. Dost thou complain of the establishment of things upon this principle; without which, a whole, composed of a variety of parts, could not have existed? or, art thou ignorant that thy particular good, and that of all singular *beings* in the world, is consulted so far as their nature admits, or their destination requires? That there is such a provident care extended to the inferior and minuter parts of the general system, may be concluded from the appointment of these intermediate powers, which are qualified to act in particular spheres, and also from the accommodation of incongruous things to wise and special ends. Pure intellect, indeed, connects not itself immediately with body; but, through the interposition of souls, variously endowed,

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† In Timæo.

† De Legib. lib. 10.

its influence, less or more, is universally distributed. We say not, precisely, in which of three conceivable ways these souls operate on bodies, or a congeries of bodies, assigned to them. Whether, in their action, upon the celestial spheres, or on the elements terrestrial, they become incorporated with them in the manner human souls are with bodies; or whether they effectuate the animation of them by the intervention of some medium; or whether they possess, in themselves, some wonderful virtue, to communicate, by their will only, such motions to bodies, may be accounted an uncertainty; but there can hardly be a doubt, that, in one or other of these ways, all corporeal movements in the world are accomplished. Over the *whole* the *intellectual king* ever presides, and rules. The source *, and cause, *he*, of all things that are fair; they are around him, and for him, not in him; who † is the unmoved mover of the spheres intellectual and corporeal; the stable centre, upon which their several circles turn; with such efficacy that the purposes of good, and beneficence, either of the physical, or the moral kind, are constantly, and generally, promoted."

Such are the outlines, and general glosses, which Plato gives of that theory of the visible and invisible world, which he acknowledges to have been borrowed from the philosophers of foreign countries, and introduced into Greece, chiefly, by Pythagoras, and learned and studied by some of the disciples of his school, and most accurately compiled by Timaeus of Locris. As the principles of the natural, or corporeal world, were held, in it, not only to be connected with, but to depend upon, those of the incorporeal one, the account of them necessarily involved both physical and theological, or metaphysical reasoning. He chose, as has been observed, to insert, at first, into his dialogues, only such short sketches of them as the dialectic argumentation admitted; and, perhaps, it required both time and application, on his part, before he could disclose the whole system of the physical and theological tenets in the manner he has done in the Timaeus. It is generally allowed that

* In Epist. secund. ad Dionysium, et in Epinomide, et in Philebo.

† — Stabilisque manens dat cuncta moveri,

is a noted verse of Boetius's poetic eulogy of the *Deity*. Consol. Philosoph. lib. 3.

that he composed it in his old age; and, upon the supposition that he did then dogmatise, it is held to be that theory of the universe which met with his highest approbation. What scientific abilities he had to give it illustration, we have, in part, already seen; and we shall find, in the sequel, that he employs them to advantage; although the principles are there delivered more in the didactic and traditionary style, than in that of the dialectic and argumentative. His sublime conceptions of the *Deity* are, as it were, more realised to our view, in his representation of the acts of the *maker* of the world. His mathematical, and scientific ideas, are still applied to his subject; and those errors in astronomy, which, in former recitals of them, appeared insufferable, are overlooked, or obliterated, in the striking perspective he gives of the symmetry of the celestial spheres. We consider not so much whether they have only an apparent, and not a real revolution; or whether the planets be fiery bodies, and what distinction is to be made between them and the fixed stars, as we are pleased with his ingenious and well imagined arrangement of them; and yet more delighted to find, that, although not viewed with the eyes of Galileo, they have been to men, in all ages, conspicuous and dignified monuments of the *divine wisdom* and *power*; and, if their wonderful motions have been, in some generations, ascribed to certain intelligent beings, either acting immediately upon them, or interposing some mysterious medium of their energy, and, in others, to a *subtile fluid*, no less inexplicable, or to the gravitation of bodies, according to their bulks, to a centre, considered as a law impressed upon them, that still the same great truth is evinced to all rational and contemplative minds, that their order and disposition have one original cause, and the correspondence and constancy of their motions, *one* supreme, and eternal efficient.

In particular branches of philosophy, it must be granted, says Plato, that some of the nations called by us barbarous, have the advantage over the Greeks. For superior knowledge in astronomy, and other sciences connected with it, Egypt and Syria have been indebted to the serenity of their skies, which being more constant than in the climate of Greece, enabled them to observe, with greater exactness, the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. With the earlier use, or invention of letters, and writing,

ing, joined to the antiquity of their states, they have also surpassed us, and other nations, in forming records of signal changes and alterations * which parts of the earth and of the sea have undergone, at intervals of time, by convulsions, deluges, or conflagrations. But, notwithstanding the priests of Egypt make this their boast, and call the Greeks *children* in science, and *novices* in the history of the *globe*, it may be justly asserted that we have, in general, improved, or reduced to a more consistent form, whatever informations we have received from them. The discourse of Timaeus the Locrian, upon the subject of the generation of the corporeal world, may bear testimony to the assertion. After a proper admonition with respect to the kind of evidence to be expected in treating the arduous subject, so variously canvassed by philosophers, and making the invocation of the gods a suitable *exordium* to it, his disquisition proceeds in the following manner.

With regard to the *whole* of things visible to us, whether we call it by the name of the world, or of the heavens, or by any other appellation, the *first* question to be stated is, "Hath it ever been without a beginning of its generation, or, did it owe its production to some anterior principle †?" Evident it is, that, so far as it is visible and tangible, it is *body*; for that is corporeal which moves the bodily senses; and, from their being moved, an opinion arises in the mind, that something exterior to them exists. But, in every species of body, it is plain, from observation, that the existence it has is in such constant mutation, from one instant of time to another, that it can only be truly said to begin to be. What thus appears to be in a course of generation, without having an ascertained form of existence, must be concluded to derive all its perceptible qualities from an adventitious cause; otherwise they must come from nothing. Therefore the material world, rendered visible to men by the sensible qualities of bodies in it, must have had an original maker, and a parent, who produced it, *because he was good*. The perfection of his own idea, and not any secondary or generated image of things, was subservient to its formation. He knew, that, in all things that might be produced in corporeal nature, nothing could appear fair,

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* In Timaeo.

† Ibid.

or the work of intelligence, that was void of *mind*. To connect this principle with what otherwise was unsusceptible of it, he gave mind to soul, and a soul to body. Hence the world is adorned with whatever is beautiful and best in the nature of things; and may be reckoned not only to have animation, but to be endowed with intelligence. It is one, as made after the image of *one*; which is not number. Fire and earth were made the two extremes of corporeal substance; and, if the world had been an extended plain, without being spherical, and having depth, one *mean* would have sufficed for the purpose of combining them; as is evident in assigning the comparative proportions of numbers, and of lineal, or plain figures. But, where solidity was to take place, two became requisite, to reduce the proportions of the parts to some equality. Therefore, air and water were produced as the two *means*, and to serve, as far as possible, for ties of congruity between themselves, and the two extremes; so that their rule might be; as fire is to air, so is air to water; and, as air is to water, so is water to earth; or in the converted ratio. Bound together in this chain of concords, the four elements of the world cannot be dissolved, unless by the will of him who brought them into combination. Beyond the circumference of the world, nothing was left, and nothing could be found, to alter their proportions, or to impair their harmony. To render it the most capacious of all forms, and figures of bodies, that might be produced in it, he made it a *sphere*; that figure, which being, every way, like itself, appears to be the most perfect and beautiful. Around it a polished *expanse* was thrown, to give its extremity the finest finishing; and, having the endowment of mind and intelligence, the circular motion, as the only competent one, was appropriated to it.

The figured, and soul-informed body of the world, was also, by its *Architect*, severed into two parts; made globular both; but the one contained within the other, and the lesser of them divided into several circles or orbs. The one division was distinguished by its spheres moving in the same plain, and being carried round in an uniform course. The other, with orbs, having different centres, could only perform its revolutions unequally. The first was thrown to the right side of the *Pole* of the world, which passes through the earth's centre; and the se-

cond to its left: And hence the revolution of the heavens, properly so called, or of the great exterior sphere, is from east to west; and that of the planets in the contrary direction. In the former, every thing is continuous, and nothing divided; in the latter, seven circles, at intervals from each other, take place; and in these revolve the seven planetary globes, of which the earth is reckoned one: The rest are, the moon, nearest the earth, the sun next, and then Lucifer, Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, and, higher than these, Saturn. But *, notwithstanding this division of the world into two parts, and the separation of the indivisible and celestial nature from the divisible, or corporeal and mixed, the informing soul, which is one, is, by a wonderful effort of its maker, so contempered, as to harmonise with both; and to animate that which has identity, and that which has difference, and form the tie of the intellectual and corporeal systems.

If we desire to trace the generation of the planets, as prior, or subsequent in time to each other, or consider their affinities as gods celestial, we must be content with such traditionary accounts of them as the first poets have given, upon the report of the sons of these gods, or the terrestrial heroes, who learned, from their fires, the heavenly genealogies. The *earth* is allowed to be the first and most ancient of them all. It is fixed in its place, to be the keeper or observer of day and night; while around it the heavens revolve, and the sun throws his light over the whole choir. The heavens show the one univided circular motion; of which

* Boetius gives the Platonic notion of the middle or mixed nature and agency of the soul of the world in these lines:

Tu triplicis medium naturae cuncta moventem,
Connectens *animam* per consona membra resolvis.

His communication of diversified motion to the two circles of the constellations and planets is thus expressed:

Quae cum secta, duos motum glomeravit in orbes.

He is then represented as performing himself the circular motion, by making his circuit around the unfathomable mind:

In semet reditura meat; mentemque profundam,
Circuit——

And by this action a similar movement is excited in the heavens.

——Et simili converrit imagine coelum. Consol. Philos. ibid.

which we can only say properly, as of eternity, that *it is*; but in the planets we behold a multiplicity, and intervals of motion. Hence the conception of time; which, although ever flowing, is only an imperfect image of *eternity*; and is, therefore, measured by days and nights, months and years; computations that can have no place, or name, antecedent to the production of the world. When, in the course of the moon's circuit, she approaches nearest the sun, the space of a month is reckoned. By passing through the signs of the *Zodiac*, the sun makes up the account of a year; and we may reckon that to be the most complete revolution of time, when the planetary bodies, running over and over their various circles, come so to coincide with each other, that the centres of them all are found in one right line. It is farther to be observed, that there arises a compressure upon the whole system from the force of the supreme and circular motion of the heavens, which has the effect of confining the bodies below them to their place; so that howsoever various in their magnitudes, or diversified in their motions, the greater impel the smaller, and the smaller, by crowding into the spaces between the greater, react upon them, and leave not any where a *vacuity* of body.

The father of the world *beheld his work with pleasure*; and, having ascertained the dominion of mind, and intelligence, in that subject which was destitute of both, he resolved that the beings excelling in intellect, whom he had made, should give proof of their intellectual powers, and that, knowing themselves, they should also have understanding of inferior natures. "Indissoluble for ever," he said to them, "is every thing which I have formed. You are all immortalised by my decree; which is a stronger assurance of your possessing endless life, than what arises from your constitution; which, although durable, yet, being generated, may dissolve. Know, that there still remain to be produced three kinds of animal forms, without which the oeconomy of the world would not be complete. The air, the water, and the earth, would want inhabitants. To you I resign the formation of the creatures proper to each of these sublunary regions. I invest you with the power of doing, in mortal natures, what I have done in the immortal; inferior to which nothing proceeds from my immediate operation. You shall be furnish-

ed with the elements, and seminal principles of these several tribes of beings. Go, therefore, and imitate, in their frames, the wisdom and contrivance you account admirable in your own."

To prevent errors in their procedure, the general line of life, and the qualities peculiar to each of the intended classes of animals, were pointed out to the divinities; and, in a more particular manner, instruction was given them with regard to the constitution of *man*; that singular sort of creature, in which were to be combined the incorruptible substance with the corruptible, the corporeal senses with the mental powers, and the appetites and affections of an earthly animal with the desires and aims of a celestial god. The *Father* of all, himself, reassumed the remaining mixture of the undivided, and divisible substance, employed in making the soul of the world; and, tempering it in the same *cup*, in due proportion, constituted of it all human souls. A number of them, equal to that of the stars, being formed, to every soul a star was assigned, in the manner of a *vehicle*; and then, to all of them, the nature of the universe, and the laws that bound each particular nature, were declared. "The lot of you all in the stars," it was said to them, "is equal; and so is your future destiny. But, observe, it is that of being enveloped in mortal bodies, and experiencing, in them, generation and corruption. From the delusion of the senses, passions will arise; love, mixed with pleasure and pain, and what is consequent to these, fear and anger, along with similar and dissimilar inquietudes. But, you are to know yourselves, and to remember your original, that places you in a rank superior to other terrestrial animals. It will be your distinguishing privilege to have a sense of religion, and a reverence of the gods, and to cultivate, along with it, the great principle of *justice*, which will teach you the due government of your own affections, and also make you admire order and harmony in things around you, and promote them in your spheres of action. By virtue of these principles, you will become victorious in your combats with inordinate passions, and, upon thus finishing your appointed course in mortal life, your recompense will be the happy return of every one to that star, which is adjusted to his temperament and good genius. But the neglect of this instruction, or failure in the requisite performance, will be attended with dismal consequences.

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All who, in this way, offend, will incur the most disagreeable transformations, and pass through a long and painful circuit of other animal bodies; a sufferance which will not terminate, until the stains contracted from corporeal affection be done away, and a restoration to the purity of their primitive condition ensue. Being thus admonished of the danger of corporeal depravation, it becomes you to beware of it, and to be sensible, that, if perverted by vice, you suffer for it, the consequent evil is chargeable upon none but yourselves." Having made all these dispositions and appointments of things, the *Deity rested in himself*.

The order given by the Father of the world, to his sons of celestial dignity, was obeyed. They employed their utmost pains, attention, and ability, in preparing bodies of a make, and contexture of parts, suited to the reception of those human souls which were to be sent down from their stars; while the seminal virtues sown in the air, in the water, and in the earth, helped to the generation of those of the various species of the brute creatures. Farther we need not prosecute the history given in the *Timæus* of the origin of man, and how the excellencies of his constitution being abused, or overbalanced by its defects, measures were taken for the support of the one and the remedy of the other. It is obvious to what moral view the line of the narrative leads, and that it goes, partly on the authority of tradition, or probable conjecture, partly upon moral and systematic conclusions about the goodness and sufficiency of all the divine works, to account for the apparent mixture of good and evil in the world; a question which, as divine revelation can only resolve, philosophy better endeavours to estimate the amount of the evil, than to assign the original cause of its introduction and prevalence.

But, it being one great object in Plato's philosophy to prove that there can be nothing morally *ill*, or culpable, either in the original constitution of the world by the Deity, or in his supreme rule over it, he calls our attention to a principle essential to all corporeal nature, that of *matter*, when considered as void of all form, and yet necessary to the *being* of it in every bodily thing. It was called, in the philosophy of Pythagoras, *necessity*; and Plato applies to it the same epithet. Nothing, says he, but what is good and fair, could proceed, either in purpose or in act, from that divine *Being*, whose first demonstrated perfection was his

his goodness. But matter, the receptacle and the nurse of forms, was not, by its capability of them, altogether adequate to the excellence of his plan and workmanship. Although, in the generation of the world, it was brought under the controul of mind, there was in it such a repugnancy, or defect, that what was less perfect in the frame of the sublunary system was to be ascribed to its influence. The intelligent soul of the world, however predominant in power, and adorned with all virtue and efficacy, was, itself, of necessity, a commixture of the undivided and divisible nature, which otherwise could not be combined. Through its agency, a boundary was set to the infinitude of matter *, and its motions were circumscribed; but in the conjunction of fire, and earth, air, and water, its instability was still apparent. None of these elements could be reckoned any more than fleeting forms of body, generated in its bosom, and convertible into one another. Whether such an *entity* as this should be deemed a substance, may be questioned; since we comprehend it only by an *adulterate* kind of reasoning. Yet, wonderful to consider, it was assumed as a principle in the world, and not only made to minister to the divine purpose, but to participate, itself, of what was divine and intelligent! Although permanent forms could not be stamped upon it, their similitudes were; and, in the directions given to its several portions, by the soul of the world, it was constrained to affect, in general, what was fair and good, and to imitate faintly the exemplars of them, in the celestial regions. Intelligent souls do not offend against rectitude, but through want of recollection, mistake, and ignorance; as views of their behaviour, in a moral light, may sufficiently prove.

Plato excuses himself, in the *Timaeus*, from introducing into his subject, of itself sufficiently intricate, a topic which he had before enlarged upon. Yet, upon the debated question about *ideas*, he finds it proper to repeat his sentiment. "Are there," says he, "or are there not, specific forms, or *ideas*, of things existing by themselves, and apart from the matter, or subject, in which they may be rendered perceptible? or, Are we to hold them to be no other ways realized as essences, but as they are reflected to the human senses from corporeal objects? Let reason,"

* In *Philebo*.

son," adds he, "and not presumption, determine the point. But, if intellect, and true opinion, be two *genuses*, as I apprehend them to be, there must be ideas subsisting by themselves, and comprehensible, not by the senses, but by the intelligence of the mind. If, on the contrary, as some would have it, intellect and true opinion differ in nothing from each other, then all things represented by the senses must be held certain and true. But my sentiment is, that they are two distinct things, neither generated together, nor in a similar manner. For to us they are distinguishable, as doctrine is from persuasion; the one being inseparably connected with just reason, and the other disjoined from it. The first is, in no respect, variable by persuasion; and the second liable to alteration, by means of it. Of true opinion, every man may participate; of intellect the gods are sharers; and along with them, in a degree, some few only of the human race. This being the case, it appears agreeable to reason, that there is an idea, the same in itself, ungenerated, and indissoluble; which receives nothing that is foreign into itself, nor does it pass into any other thing; and is not, therefore, perceptible by the sight, or any of the senses, but only by the intelligent mind. For the other thing, next to the idea, which bears its name and similitude, is perceived by the senses, is carried about by another, and is now engendered, and now obliterated, can be no more than the object of opinion excited by the senses." Strange and absurd, in an inconceivable degree, as this hypothesis will be pronounced, of ideas existing separately by themselves, independent of either a corporeal or mental subject in which they are generated, it must be confessed to be the doctrine of Plato. It was the solution, which, probably, he himself had invented, of the great question amongst philosophers, about state and motion in the world, or the proof of there being truths eternal, and immutable, in the nature of things, as well as variable and transient perceptions. In vain would we endeavour to acquit Plato of broaching this most extravagant conception, at least as what he thought a requisite, and not improbable conjecture, and say, with Ammonius, Simplicius, and other reconcilers of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, that no more was meant by the former, in his theory of ideas, than their subsistence in the divine mind, and, when the world was produced, their impressions being stamped on material

material substances. The Stagyrte would, upon this supposition, have had no sufficient ground to impugn and explode, in the manner he does, the ideas of Plato, which would have approached near to, and been almost the same, with his own *substantial forms* in the physical world; with this difference only, that Aristotle, maintaining the eternity of the world, of course supported the eternity both of the generation and corruption of his specific forms. But, adopting this interpretation, we must look upon the *Parmenides* of Plato, which yet is accounted a singular effort of his genius, not only to be a piece of false philosophy, but such a medley of superfluous and unmeaning sophistry, as perhaps never came from the pen of any philosopher; and we must join in the predicament with it, various allusions to the same theory about ideas in several other of his dialogues. It appears to be a mistaken, or an arbitrary gloss of Plato's text, to suppose, that what he calls the *fields of truth*, accessible to souls in their pre-existent state, and in which they contemplated intelligible forms, was the mind, or intellect of the Deity. The one eternal idea, which admitted neither of multiplicity, or diversity, was only comprehensible by the *deity* himself, and could not be legible to inferior intelligences. It became so, as we may more justly understand Plato, by emanent forms from it, as the archetype of them all. For, as has been said, all things are *around him*, not *in him*; who is above essence. In the ethereal heavens are exhibited ideas, which are incorporeal essences of things, in themselves the same, and ever permanent. They are more or less clearly read by the several orders of celestial beings, according as they approximate nearer, or recede farther from him, the fountain of intellect and truth.

With respect to what has been said, of the celestial divinities being employed in the formation of man, and other terrestrial animals, it may be observed, that Plato appears to have had no notion of any of these works, even in their corporeal parts, being accomplished by an agent that had not itself the knowledge of organisation, and that to assign a blind undesigning cause of them, such as that of a *plastic* nature, which Aristotle adopted, was considered by him as an absurdity in philosophy. In the detail he enters into of the structure of the human body, and the symmetry of its parts, he takes frequent occasion to mark the divine artifice,

artifice, and the wonderful contrivance displayed in them. The description given by him, although but an outline, when compared with the *anatomical* one of *Galen* *, an eminent admirer of his, is sufficiently striking: And, indeed, the argument is so perspicuous, and the proofs it admits of are so forcible, that it may be said, the multiplication of them hardly increases its evidence. In the investigation of the *uses* of the parts of the human frame, if fifty of them be proved the wisest that could be, and others are found to answer their ends, although we know not precisely in what manner, the demonstration of an intelligent designer of them must be owned to be complete. The discovery of some hundred of these uses, which *Galen* minutely unfolds, may more amuse or astonish the mind, but, unless to a most sceptical, or prejudiced one, it adds little to the measure of rational conviction.

The range which *Plato* takes, in his theory of the natural elements, in his account of their subserviency to the composition of bodies, animate, and inanimate, in his explications of various phenomena, in the region of the air, and in the globe of the earth, along with his analysis of the diseases incident to bodies organised, like the human, and the remedies of which they are susceptible, all together show the great extent of his genius, and the fertility of his imagination, adequate to every subject that required either accurate observation, or ingenious reasoning; and that, if he frequently errs, it is because the age he lived in had not attained to these discoveries, which a stricter attention to the process of nature, and a succession of researches and experiments have produced. It appears, that, although from some accidental disgust between him and *Democritus*, he did not correspond with that philosopher, he was well acquainted with the principles of the Atomical philosophy, and that his knowledge in mathematics and geometry qualified him for the exactest study of physics, in every branch. Of this truth the *Timæus* affords several proofs that might be quoted; and these not unrespectable by modern physiologists. In preferring the abstract to the analytical species of science, he doubtless followed the bent of his genius; and, notwithstanding his system be vamped with some chimaeras, his speculative ingenuity

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* De Usu Partium.

genuity is to be admired. Attachment to such speculations proved, indeed, the retardment of human knowledge, and, for ages, misled it, in physiology and astronomy. But whether physics, as now made the object of study, independently of the science of incorporeal principles, may not, by defective or fallacious experiments, often lead to delusion, deserves the attention of those who would consider all the phenomena of nature as explicable from the observation only of the qualities of bodies. The analysis of many of them, we know, long and industriously sought after, and often believed to have been completely displayed, has proved erroneous. The *chemical* principles, reckoned to be the components of all other physical substances, have been found, in numberless instances, incomprehensive of their *stamina*. Notwithstanding the ancient doctrine of *occult* qualities has been exploded, it still appears impossible to banish it altogether from this boundless field of investigation; in which the *wisdom of nature*, considered as a sensible exhibition of that which is supernatural and *divine*, must always outreach the limited survey that can be taken of it by human minds.

We shall here conclude the physical part of Plato's philosophy with a *Note*, respecting a point which the perusal of his works suggested to his first Christian interpreters, and that has been since insisted upon by some of his learned modern expounders.

Note.—The point to be considered is, Whether the Grecian philosopher may be understood, from the import of some passages in his dialogues and epistles, to have entertained some notion of a *Trinity* of persons in the *divine nature*, consonant to what is revealed in the *sacred scripture*, and embraced as an article of the Christian faith? In stating this question, it is, in the first place, to be observed, that several of the early *fathers* of the Christian church, such as Justin Martyr *, Tertulian †, Clemens Alexandrinus ‡, Origen, and Eusebius, ascribe to Plato a theological doctrine, either much the same with, or most similar to that of the Christian *Trinity*. As a foundation for this opinion, the great

* Apologia, sect. 41. et 76. 77.

† Tertul. Apolog. cap. 21.

‡ Strommata. Clem. Alex. et Praepar. Evangel. Eusebii, passim.

great speculative principles upon which the philosopher builds his theological and physical system, and that have been called the *Ternary* of Plato, were referred to by them. What has been shown, both in the dialectic and physical part of his philosophy, may prove, indeed, how all things that exist, are reduced by him, and comprehended, under *three* principles. In the abstruse reasoning in the *Parmenides*, there is said to be, One, without any thing; One, which is several things; and, One, and several things. Equivalent to these, in the *Timaeus*, are stated, Deity, Idea, Matter; to which corresponds the triple system of the universe, the intellectual world, the intelligent, or rational, and the visible. Nor is this all the ground upon which Plato is represented as a *Trinitarian*. In more distinct proof of the allegation, some passages, in which he uses metaphysical expressions, are adduced. When he calls the Deity *, the Eternal King, and Father of all things, and the world produced by him, *his son*, his *λογος*, or *word* of wisdom made manifest, the sensible image of his understanding and power, and the mirror reflecting the rays of his otherwise incomprehensible divinity, his meaning, in these expressions, taken in connection with what is clearly delivered by him in his epistle to Hermias, is referable, say they, to a first incorporeal and animating principle, declared to be the adorned soul of the world, and having *personality* †: For there Plato recommends a solemn *adjuration*, by the *God*, the *conductor* of all things, present and future, and by the *Father God* of that *conductor*, and their *cause*.

It may be here asked by some, Why so respectable a number of the Christian theologians chose, from such passages in Plato, to maintain, that the sacred mystery of the *Trinity*, acknowledged to be only revealed in the scriptures, might yet be so well known to the learned of the heathen world, as to be interwoven with their theories of the universe; and how the cause of Christianity could be advanced by holding this opinion? From what is intimated in their writings, it appears, that they had a special inducement for adopting this controvertible, and otherwise, perhaps, unnecessary assertion. The doctrine of the *Trinity* being impugned by some of the philosophers as implying a plurality of Gods, or

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inconsistent.

* In Epist. 2d, et in *Epinomide*.

† In Epist. 6ta.

inconsistent with the unity of the *Deity*, it seemed a ready, and no improper way of removing this objection, to show, that some of the wisest of the philosophers, such as Pythagoras, Zeno, Cleanthes, and especially Plato, who asserted the principle of a one eternal and undivided deity, did yet, in the contemplations of his nature, express themselves in terms analogous to those used by the Christians, and understood in the sense of there being *three persons* in the divine nature. In consequence of this argument, they endeavoured not only to find in the *Ternary* of Plato a representation of the *Trinity*, but to prove that he, and other philosophers, could not have approached so near to the discovery of this sacred truth as they do in their works, without some knowledge of the Mosaic scriptures, or other inspired prophetic writings, under the Jewish dispensation. In support of the last point, it is well known, that Josephus's authority is chiefly appealed to *; and that the vouchers quoted by him, Clearchus, Aristaeus, and Hermippus, as authors of credit, are much called in question. Amongst the moderns, however, the argument has been taken up, and prosecuted with great display of ancient erudition, by Augustinus Steuchus †, Marsilius Ficinus, and Joannes Picus de Mirandola, and, more lately, by Vossius and Bochart.

Upon this learned controversy, the note here introduced cannot expatiate, and much less can it pretend to decide. When we consider, that in most of the speculations formed by philosophers, concerning this vast universe, as having a beginning, and being produced by a first *cause*; the obvious, and marked perfections of that Deity would be, and have, in reality, been, his *goodness*, his *wisdom*, his *power*; and that, in his motive to create, the first would be apparent; in his orderly, and suitable arrangement of all things, the second; and, in his constant preservation and maintenance of them, the third; it may be contended, that the coincidence (so far as it may be reckoned such) of the Platonic Ternary with the revealed doctrine of the *Trinity*, is rather to be accounted accidental, than derived from traditional authority, and that, too, referable to the Mosaic, or scriptural antiquities. When it cannot be truly affirmed, that Plato deviated from what appears to have been
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* Contra Appion, lib. 1.

† De Perenni Philosophia.

the received course of philosophising, which generally proceeded upon the assumption of two original principles; whence resulted a third; the opinion, that he took his statement of three principles, not from this common theory, but from tradition, may be deemed a precipitant and arbitrary one.

Upon the other side of the argument, if it be insisted upon, as a fact, that he advanced this theory, as he found it in the Pythagorean system, it must be confessed that a difficulty arises, sufficient to restrain decision in the question: For, notwithstanding all that may be said about the improbability, that either Pythagoras or Plato, would seek for, or meet with any philosophic or theological information amongst a people, in such humble circumstances as the Jews, there is still reason to adhere to what has been before remarked upon this topic, that, with regard to the early philosophers, who travelled into foreign countries, for instruction and knowledge of every kind, this consideration did not operate; and that, as to the difficulty of conceiving how any speculative and abstruse doctrine could be transmitted, from one nation to another, without the grossest mistakes, it is to be remembered, that, as amongst the Egyptians, so, amongst other nations, this was done by means of symbols, more than by writing; and hence the curious investigation of the former in all researches into ancient knowledge. If it be said, that the Jews, whose divine law laid them under a solemn prohibition of sensible representations of the Deity, could have no sacred symbols; and that, accordingly, nothing of this kind was known amongst them, but the *ineffable name*; it may be asked, Did the veneration of their law hinder them from the breaches of it, and falling into acts of idolatry; or, are we to believe that their learned Rabbis never did, in imitation of other nations, presume to symbolise? The contrary will be acknowledged; and that they early attempted it in their manner of writing the *most holy* name. Their constant concealment of this from inquisitive strangers is not credible; especially, when liable, in their captivities, to be scorned as a people destitute of speculative knowledge. The Assyrians and Egyptians must, therefore, have had special information of their theology and antiquities; and whether Plato, who, as well as Pythagoras, was a diligent collector of foreign theology and science, had not met with

with some traditions, or writings, of a *Cosmogony*, nearly resembling, if not the same with the scriptural one of Moses, may be remitted to the judgment of every unbiaſſed peruſer of the *Timaeus*; when he reads, *That the one and good formed the celeftial and ſublunary ſpheres, making a diviſion between them; that he ſaw that his work was good, and had pleaſure in it; and, after attending to the compoſition of man, that he reſted in himſelf; and theſe are not the only ſimilitudes.*

To conclude the argument, although not to determine in it; May we not ſay with reaſon, that ſeveral of the heathen philoſophers were led, not caſually, but partly from moral reaſons, and partly upon traditional grounds, to the acknowledgement of three principles, or original cauſes of all things, which were erroneouſly and abſurdly conceived by them, and in no explication reconcileable with the revealed doctrine of the *Trinity*; yet, that their *ſtumbling* upon the verge of a ſacred truth might, providentially, be made ſubſervient to its proper diſcovery in due time, and to have the effect of preparing mens minds for its reception? Convinced from the revelation of it, the moſt intelligent of them might be, that, as the works of God, in the natural world, could not, in their production, contrivance, and extent, be fully underſtood by them, and, as the human frame itſelf was, in ſeveral reſpects, unintelligible, and a myſtery, much more muſt the divine nature and eſſence be myſterious, and have a veil, through which ſuch limited conceptions as the human cannot clearly penetrate.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Openings of moral sentiments in Man ;—his mixed constitution, how adjusted.

—Pleasure not the same with eligible good.—Prudence an essential constituent of Virtue.—Assimilation to the Deity the end of human action.—Immortality in a Species of it, exemplified in all the productions of Nature.—The Contemplative Philosopher.—Principles and views of political governments.

UPON mankind, the gods have bestowed no faculty, or privilege, more valuable and precious than that of philosophizing. As, without the bodily organ of sight, neither the stars, nor the sun, nor the heavens *, could be perceived, but their order and congruity be as a blank ; so bereft of philosophy, which opens the eye of the soul, mental contemplation would sleep ; neither causes nor effects could be known ; and human reason, and human action, would be alike involved in obscurity and confusion ; yet, as the corporeal eye observes, not in vain, the heavenly motions, but receives a picture of their uniformity, so the rational faculty, excited by philosophic study, awakes to a more distinct consideration of the principle by which they are governed : A model, it appears, to which the thoughts and movements of the soul may be conformed ; and a rule divine, for the proper direction and consistency of its aims and affections. The sense of hearing, also, conspires with that
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* In Timæo.

of the fight, to give the impresson of mental harmony. Why are modulations imparted to the human voice; why have men sensibility to the concords of music *, but that they may learn from them that moderation of the passions, that composure of the irregular affections of the soul, which these perceptions are naturally fitted to inspire? Surely something more, than an irrational sense of pleasure, was intended by their being peculiarly assigned to the human race. That they were bestowed by the *Muses* for a nobler end, all conversant with the productions of these sisters of harmony well understand: For, even the regular cadence, or *rhythmus*, used by the poets, is known to have its effect, not only upon the ear, but upon the mind, and to beget in it congenial measures and graces.

What these graces are, and in what manner the human soul is susceptible of them, philosophy presumes to unfold; not altogether, indeed, as a science of human invention, or separated from such a sense of divine things as a contemplation of the universe may afford; but under a persuasion, that the wisdom of human life is marked out by the prescription of the Gods †, and can only be truly learned in connection with a pious sentiment of their order and appointment. That an order is taken, and an oeconomy prescribed by them, is evinced, even from the mixed composition of human nature. In it, although the corporeal and incorporeal substances are joined, and the irrational soul with the rational principle, in the former of which the irascible and concupiscible passions are found, and, in the latter, the deliberative faculty; yet these are not confusedly thrown together, but in a manner which shows, that an essential difference obtains between them. Nature does not divide things that are alike, and congenial, but those which are not the same, and disagree. That the intelligent principle might suffer as little as possible from the impulse of the animal appetites and passions, and, at the same time, be kept in mind of its divine original, and its ascendancy over them, it is set apart in an exalted place of the corporeal frame. It is seated in the head, as in a tower or citadel, whilst the latter are degraded below it by their position. They are distinguished into the irascible

* De Legibus, lib. 2. in initio.

† In Theaeteto, et in Menone.

cible and concupiscible passions; from a diversity rather conceivable than real; since both are only conversant about joy or grief, temporary and mortal. By these springs they are constantly moved, and are incapable of knowing any other motives of action. They cherish, without distinction, all bodily affection, and give support to its influence over the whole man. The rational soul spurns such attachment, and holds it in contempt. Conscious of inherent faculties, superior in kind, and more enlarged than those of the senses, it aspires to cultivate and improve them. It glows with an ardent desire for the discovery of truth, independent of sensible objects; and, convinced that its destiny is not confined to mortal good, it seeks to attain that which is imperishable and immortal.

But how does philosophy pretend to adjust this complex constitution of human nature; how does it reconcile such jarring principles, and make them co-operate to one end? To answer this question properly, some series of reasoning will be requisite; yet a general reply to it may be given in a few words. To lessen the contest of the discording principles, reason dictates one plain rule *. Let each of them be allowed its proper food and aliment; and, then, each of them will more easily admit of a discipline effective of their agreement. But the maxim is not to be understood, as if the rational principle were to be occupied solely with its separate contemplations, and the irascible left to follow its career, and the concupiscible suffered to pursue its peculiar gratifications. For, beside that such a life is, evidently, inconsistent with itself, and could not be supported by any creature; there is a measure ordained in nature, for the suitable expansion of the powers of beings, both animated and intelligent, whether they be those of knowledge or those of action. The intelligence, even of *celestial* beings, is commensurate to their spheres; and, although all corporeal things are made for the sake of the incorporeal, and human things on account of the divine, yet, in the mixed condition of humanity, the consideration and study of both its constituent parts is necessary, and the culture of each of them re-

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* In Timæo, in fine.

quired, in proportion to its importance *. Man's knowledge cannot be, altogether, abstract and contemplative, but must include that of himself, and of human condition. He must understand not only what is true, in the nature of things, but likewise what is good and useful in the affections and actions of mankind. *Know thyself*, therefore, was † that inscription in the Delphic temple, which was declared to be most divine and worthy of a God. It directs, indeed, to the recognition of the intelligent soul, as the principal part of the human constitution, and what is, properly, the *man*; and that its nature is ever to be distinguished from what communicates with, and appertains to it; for such are the corporeal appetites ‡ and passions. With respect to the agency of these, the discerning principle only can judge, whether it tends to good or to ill. The irascible kind appear to have utility in repelling what is offensive, or injurious to the man: The *concupiscible* (so to call them) in affecting, and procuring, what is pleasant and agreeable. Yet both of them are constantly inclined to excess; so that neither the harm that is apprehended, nor the pleasure that is sought for, is reduced to any measure, unless the reasoning faculty interpose to prescribe it. Experience soon discovers to it, that a degree of pain may frequently be more eligible than pleasure; and, therefore, that the latter is not to be estimated as a genus of good in itself §. Evident, indeed, it is, that, in the institution of nature, the one, as well as the other, is subjected to the discipline of reason; and that, in order to the attainment of real good in life, if the *quantum* of fear or grief should be diminished, so that of joy or pleasure ought also to be moderated.

In correspondence to this rule, philosophy teaches to observe a *mean* in all the irrational affections of the soul, whether they proceed from appearances of evil or good. This is the natural, and, therefore, the best condition of man, and human life; when the fewest, and these the least hurtful impressions, are made upon the tranquility of the mind. The consequences of violent passion, and unruly appetite, are, by this course,

* In Philebo, vel de Summo Hominis Bono, ad fin.
primo, vel de Nat. Hom.
lib. 9.

† In Alcibiade
‡ Dialog. de Republica, lib. 4.

§ Ibid.

course, happily avoided ; and the calmer and milder affections, which nourish life, and prolong it, and the studies and pursuits which invigorate the soul, without the ravage of its faculties, are cherished and improved. Nature, not overpowered, or agitated, by the excesses of grief, or of joy, is neither disgusted nor fatiated with life, but feels its restoration to that equal state, in which the *goods* of the mind, and those of the body, are together best obtained.

How widely different from this is the vulgar life of mankind ; whether it be that of the ambitious of dominion, or of the covetous of wealth. In any scene of it no equality of enjoyment is known ; but, as it happens, desire of pleasure is succeeded by a surfeit of it ; fear, by presumption, grief, by ecstatic joy ; or else dejection, from disappointed passion, takes place ; timidity, from apparent difficulties, and sorrow, mingled with envy, from despair *. The extremes of the passions never fail to follow each other in this manner, where, to none of them, a boundary is fixed. Even the effect of these of the joyful kind proves by no means happy ; when the gratification of the appetite, or passion, is only regarded ; and, no attention being paid to what the body can admit, or the soul endure, instead of their being kept in a healthful and sound state, the premature decay, or languor of both, is incurred.

Men, however, there are, and these not a few, who maintain that pleasure is a real good in itself † ; and that the former epithet may well stand for a definition of the latter. But, surely, they ought to explain what species of pleasure they mean ; otherwise, there must be the greatest ambiguity in their definition. Nothing is more evident, than that a vast diversity of tastes and opinions, with respect to what is called by the general name of pleasure, obtains amongst mankind. So much do they disagree, that some not only reject what others approve, under this vague term, but pronounce that kind of pleasure which varies from their own to be, not any thing good, but an evil. In this way of reckoning there must be, it seems, both good and evil pleasures. How, then, can all pleasures be held forth under the denomination of good ?

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* De Republica, lib. 8.

† Ibid. lib. 6.

Common reason rests not in this delusion; and philosophy directs to some more just and determined conception of what nature has ordained to be the real good of man *. The idea of the one first and supreme good is not, indeed, of easy attainment; and, in order to only a partial apprehension of it, much cultivation of the mind, by philosophic study, becomes necessary. But, so far as we may understand *good* to be a quality, either of the object of human affections, or of the affections themselves, it may be distinguished into that which respects the soul or the body; or what may be called good divine and human †. In these two kinds of it, there is, evidently, a greater and a lesser species; yet they have a necessary connection; and the human good, depending upon the divine for its efficacy, is generally found in conjunction with the latter. It is of the nature of all good to have *utility* ‡; and, where this qualification is derived, not from accidental circumstances, but from the rational and active powers of the soul, it obtains the appellation of *virtue*, or of that good, which, although human in its operation, has an original truly divine.

Would we then form a conception, not of the *one absolute* good, but of that which, in the condition of human nature, may be accounted the nearest in affinity to it; we must reckon it to have the properties of *perfection*, *sufficiency*, and *eligibility* ||. The most perfect it ought to be in the species of good; sufficient in the degree, so as to surpass all other examples; and eligible, as having native delight, and causing desire; but desirous of nothing beyond itself. If we should place it in pure mind alone, unaffected with pleasure or joy, even although all disquiet was removed, it must be owned, as has been said, that such a life, however suitable to more exalted intelligences, would be as little eligible, as competent to creatures of the human frame. If, again, we should resolve the greatest good of our nature into sensations of pleasure, destitute of mind, and the reflections of reason, it would imply a sort of life, of all others the most absurd and preposterous §. It is difficult, indeed, to conceive what a strange and chimerical existence it would prove, in which

* De Republica, lib. 6.

† In Menone, vel de Virtute.

‡ De Legibus, lib. 1.

|| In Philebo.

§ Ibid.

which there would be joy instantaneous, but never continued; and the sense of pleasure, and that always evanescent. It could be compared to nothing more properly than to a *sponge*, no sooner wet than dry; or to the *oyster*, or the *muscle*, that alternately opens and shuts its shell, according to the flux or reflux of the waves. Hardly, indeed, can it be supposed, that the most abject votaries of pleasure would make choice of this kind of life. In the estimate, therefore, of real good, pleasure, as an ambiguous term, and by some taken in its worst sense, cannot be admitted to stand in competition with mind, nor upon an equality, either for perfection, or sufficiency with wisdom, science, or rational knowledge *. There is, however, no occasion to quarrel with the word, because it has been abused; and much less to reject, as some would do, the proper idea that may be assigned to it, as if nothing was to be understood by pleasure but what was ignominious. Real pleasures certainly there are, as well as false and deceitful ones; temperate as well as excessive; some more steady, and others more inconstant. Although, by the indiscriminate admission of these, or their unlimited accumulation, any human subject of them would be found in a most deplorable case, yet no just objection can lie, even from the strictest philosophy, against a proper selection of pleasure, and assuming it in a certain measure and degree, as an ingredient in human good. Of five degrees, by which we may conceive the *perfect*, the *sufficient*, and the *eligible* kind to be constituted, pleasure can only claim the last †. First of all, in this estimate, we must place the *one absolute* good, the principle and the measure of universal nature: Next to it truth; to which commensurable ideas and pulchritude appertain: In the third rank, mind and wisdom: In the fourth, the properties of mind, which are the sciences, and arts, and right opinions. In the fifth, those pleasures which are accompanied with no disquiet; such are the pure and unmixed ones afforded by the sciences; and, lastly, let the pleasures of sense follow after them with a moderate pace.

But, since to the expetible and sufficient good of man, a mixture of pleasure is allowed to be requisite, Why should there be so much reserve expressed

* In *Philebo*.

† De *Legibus*, lib. 4.

expressed with regard to the latter, and its degradation to the lowest class be thus insisted upon? In reply to this question, it may be affirmed, that the scale of good, which has been traced, is properly adjusted in its degrees; and that, to an impartial eye, it must appear, that the precedency, in each of them, is given to things, in their nature, more allied to true good than pleasure can be reckoned. Mind has certainly, in itself, more pulchritude than the pleasure of the senses. Men, who pursue the latter immoderately, are often put to the blush; or they seek to conceal from the observation of others their shameful desires. All the acts of mind and reason have measure and moderation, without which real good cannot be found. But, compared with them, how vehement, impetuous, and headlong, are the *opposite* ones of pleasure? Every votary of Venus is ready to swear, that he may well be pardoned by the Gods; because he is not master of himself. There is, then, no error committed, or any trespass made upon the value of pleasure, by placing it in the lowest degree of good. Upon the supposition that the *sciences*, as the daughters of mind and wisdom, were to deliver their opinion about pleasure's admission into their company, they would surely give it with caution; and not, as Homer and the poets have done, suffer it to be incorporated with them. Their sentence would be, not only to mark the pure and the true, together with the natural and the necessary kinds, for having privilege of association with them, but to except against all the intemperate, the overswelling and tumultuary species. They would wish to have even the approved sort, rather in their train, than always by their side; and they might justify their verdict in the manner following: "To us a flood of pleasures is altogether unsuitable; and such of them as run to excess are inconvenient. In the way of our progress they would throw many impediments. Too apt are the souls in which we dwell to be perverted by the insatiable desire of pleasure. Under its influence we may be retarded, but can never advance in knowledge. Negligence, and self-oblivion, are always the concomitants of immoderate joy. Willing we are to admit the pure, and the true, the sound, and the temperate delights, as our familiar and domestic friends. These being the natural attendants of virtue, we readily embrace. But the rage of pleasure, with its depravities, can be in no concord

concord with mind. In man, wisdom and pleasure ought to be tempered together, as they are in the universe. There the visible good, ever keeping an equal tenor, is neither defective nor redundant; but, being in harmony with itself, and its subject, is, therefore, permanent, and everlasting."

With regard to all things, divine and human, it is a law established, that mind, or reason, not only predominates, but becomes the leading principle, and necessary ingredient, in whatever is truly excellent and good. Temperance, justice, and fortitude, may be as truly reckoned the primary perfections of the human soul, and its proper goods, as health, beauty, and strength, are allowed to be bodily excellencies, and benefits *. The former, if not always the procurers, are at least the conservators of the latter. But, what is more particularly to be remarked, neither of them can be accounted either perfections or utilities, but as they are accompanied with prudence. Separate from this faculty of the mind, they could be only accidentally under these predicaments; and, as it happened, either advantageous or prejudicial. If, therefore, prudence does not constitute the whole of virtue, as found in the human soul, it certainly forms its most essential parts. It takes that course with the irascible and concupiscible passions, which, on account of their indocility, is the only proper one for moderating their excess, and rendering them implicitly subservient to virtue. It allows to each of them a certain extent of energy and gratification; and endeavours, not by instruction, but by habit, to make them bear a measure of restraint and controul. Known it is, that the mere animal part of the human frame may be brought, by custom, to be, as it were, observant of a rule. How much more may this take place in the appetites and passions †, which seem to join to sensibility some traces of reason. It appears, at least, that the resentful feeling, which we call *indignation*, makes either a nearer approach to reason, or is more readily impressed with its dictates, than what is experienced in the other blind passions. Violent anger often carries along with it a sense of the injurious nature of the passion, and reluctantly gives scope to its rage, or finds it quickly succeeded by compunction.

* In Menone, *ibid.*

† Dialog. 4 de Republica.

compunction. Indignation, also, sometimes rises in the soul against the extravagant desires of the senses. What is reported of Leontius, the son of Aglaion, exemplifies this. In ascending from the Piræus to the city of Athens, he understood that there were to be seen, on the other side of the north wall, a number of human bodies, which lay dead, and exposed near the shore. Strongly inclined to look upon them, he was yet restrained by a feeling of horror. He turned his face another way, and, in contest with himself, covered his eyes. When he found, notwithstanding all efforts against the gratification of his sight, that he could not resist it, he advanced towards the spectacle with his eyes wide open, and then indignantly exclaimed, "Look on, ye wretched eyes, and, since you will have it so, be satiated with this pleasant view." It is thus, we may be sensible, that the indignant passion frequently opposes vehement desire *; and hence there is some ground to conclude, that, so far as ambition, or the lust of power, may be connected with an indignant temper, its votaries are in less danger of losing the sense of virtue than those who give way insensibly, and without any check in their minds, to the allurements of sensual pleasure.

To the ground-work laid by *prudence*, in the human soul, for preserving the sense, and supporting the practice of virtue, may be fitly added certain studies salutary and improving to the mind, and also some practical institutions and arts, found to be conducive to the temperament of the body. Amongst the former are, chiefly, to be reckoned the sciences of geometry, astronomy, and the powers of numbers; and, analogous to them, the theory of sounds, and musical harmony †. The Gymnastic exercises, when joined with music, are well adapted to promote the soundness of the bodily frame, and the composure of the passions. By their means, not only abstinence, patience, and hardiness, may be learned, but, also, sedateness of soul, lenity, and the milder affections, be inspired. The concord of the irascible with the concupiscible passions may, in this manner, be attained; while, to each of them, a kind of nutrition, amongst with discipline, is dispensed. Instead of ferocious animation, men may learn fortitude, that calm and intrepid temper

* De Repub. lib. 9.

† Ibid. Dialog. 4. et 7.

temper of the soul, which holds no object to be awful, or action fearful, when reason, or a sense of duty, requires the encounter of the one, or the performance of the other *. Instead of a listless propensity to pleasure, the virtue of temperance may be acquired, by which the soul's mastery over the corporeal appetites is proved, or their concord with its more manly affections ascertained. If, to these two moral qualities, as the dictates of prudence, be united that of *justice*, the practical virtues required of man may be reckoned complete. For *justice*, considered not in reference to any particular act or disposition, but as having a respect to the whole moral constitution of the soul, enjoins, beside the agreement of its rational and irrational parts †, that each of them should act in its own place, and not intrude into the function of another. Let the lower and baser appetites and affections, when not refractory to reason's voice, but submissive to her commands, follow their objects, and be solaced with such good as may be found in them. No otherwise is the oeconomy of the animal nature to be maintained; and, so far as the human constitution participates of it, a similar regulation must take place. In civil policy, and that of a well governed city, we may also observe the good effect of the prescribed rule; nor is there any other of more avail to the public peace and welfare, than that which obliges each of the several classes of the community to perform *only* its proper business.

That which is good and useful is also *fair*. Virtue, therefore, which has the former qualities, cannot be destitute of the latter excellence ‡. Every thing beautiful hath its proportions and measures, which distinguish it from what is uncircumscribed, and reduced to no determined form. If there be in human life that which gives it designation, or any speciality of character, it must come from virtue; which, as has been said, makes the rational and irrational parts of the human nature to have consistency, and determines, to one end, the action of both. Nothing but what is, apparently, good, or useful, or fair, is lovely and desirable; yet many are the deceptions of men, from an admission of false

Q q

images

* De Repub. Dialog. 4.

† Ibid. Dialog. 9.

‡ In Timaeo, et in Philebo.

images of these qualities. It can hardly be conceived that any love evil, as *evil*, or esteem what is deformed, as *deformed*; and, when a wrong approbation is given, it may be generally concluded to proceed from an erroneous imagination, or a mistaken judgment, and not from the *will*, or real purpose of the mind. Every species of *imprudence* has, commonly, some epithet of reproach or scorn affixed to it, that expresses its evil nature or deformity; whereas, on the contrary, *prudence*, which carries in its train temperance, justice, and fortitude, can be no otherwise characterised than as the promoter and perfecter of the best good, both of soul and body. The value of the former, above that of the latter, is manifest. Bodily good, like bodily beauty, is changeable *. It is made up of various and contrary things; and, therefore, it can have no determined essence †. But every virtue is not, *simply*, a quality, but also an active power of the soul, which depends not on external circumstances, nor is variable by them, but, participating of the essence of good, which is incorporeal and divine, it is fitted to survive the body, and become immortal, together with the subject in which it inheres.

After all, it must be remembered, that things which have peculiar excellence are difficult ‡. Virtue, which is the noblest and best endowment of human nature, is not of easy acquisition. To be possessed of it, men must become *real* philosophers, or investigators of truth, as found in intelligible ideas, and in the stable essences of things §. There are abuses

* In Philebo.

† De Republica, lib. 5.

‡ It is not to be understood upon what grounds it has been alledged, that *bodily* qualities were little, or but slightly distinguished, by the philosophers of Greece, from the virtues of the soul and *mind*. In the Platonic philosophy, the latter were held to be, not only *rational* excellencies, in contra-distinction to the corporeal and irrational affections, but, in so far as they might participate more of the powers of reason and intellect, they were deemed qualities or excellencies of a divine nature. In Aristotle's Ethics, although the principles of morals are taken upon a lower scale, we shall find that the distinction between corporeal qualities and the mental virtues is explicitly marked. According to the doctrine of the Stoics, the *virtues* are powers of the soul in a manner created by itself, and independent of all bodily dispositions. And even Epicurus acknowledges, that the former have a preference to the latter.

§ De Repub. lib. 6.

abuses of philosophy, by its common professors, which have made it incur obloquy and reproach: And, amongst other errors they have committed, it may be reckoned a fundamental one, that the *ethical* part is too much considered as a science by itself; which teaches what is convenient, and what is useful, in the conduct of life, without respect to more sublime principles that obtain in the *universe*. They think it sufficient to show this action to be good, and that just, one prudent, and another generous, detached from any sense or persuasion, rational or contemplative, of the existence of such *intelligibles*, as goodness, justice, wisdom, and bounty. To know goodness, it is necessary to have some idea of a one absolute good, the original of all examples of it. If to perceive it in *singulars* be advantageous and instructive to human minds, to contemplate it in the archetypal idea, must prove of still more efficacious and beneficial influence upon them. To the omission of this doctrine in philosophy may, perhaps, be ascribed the inconsiderable effect that its moral precepts are observed to have upon ourselves *, and other men †. There is much in what may be called the *circumduction* of the mind to its proper objects, and such as lead it to form general ideas, or enlarged views of truth. By following this course of study, the mind acquires a divine vigour in the pursuit of knowledge, which is not easily relaxed. Let the eye of the soul, therefore, be early set upon the contemplation of the virtues, as having their ideal and permanent forms. Let it not be darkened by the fumes of passion, or dazzled by the glare of sensible objects, and the happiest effects may be expected to ensue. The beam of truth upon the mind will be clear, lively, and delightful; and the attraction to virtue powerful, in proportion to the superiority of its native charms, above all other objects.

What, then, is the *end*, and what the scope of human life and action? It can be pronounced, according to true philosophy, to be nothing less than an *assimilation* to the Deity, or to be conformed to the will and purposes of the *intellectual mind* ‡, that rules the universe. Since the human soul is properly *the man*, and that heaven born soul a participant

Q q 2

of

* In Menone, vel de Virtute.

† In Repub. lib. 7.

‡ In Timaeo, in fine.

of immortality, the scope of its action must rise to this importance and dignity. Attached, as we are, to mortal bodies *, and conversant with corporeal things, transient and perishable, yet the whole terrestrial nature, which is animated, and more especially the human, aspires to immortality, and makes incessant efforts to attain it. Whilst no corporeal substance, inanimate or animated, continues the same, but, having a short lived vigour, verges to decay, the faculty of generation, common to both, avails to reproduce and perpetuate their kinds. By this means, all plants and vegetables transmit an offspring. To this course, the animals of every species are irresistibly impelled. Whether of the earth, of the sea, or of the air, they feel the same propensity, and appear to live not so much for themselves as for their progeny, or for the present time as for futurity. In this manner, men, substituting their representatives, appear to themselves to immortalise their being. Consumed by years, they are seen to be renewed in the forms of their children. Whilst they find not only their bodies change, but that opinions, manners, customs, and even principles, and motives of action amongst mankind, vary; yet they are still prompted to act in one shape or another, as if a kind of immortality was their hope, as well as their desire; and, on account of some remarkable deed or performance, might be their lot in the world. Notwithstanding the *sciences* themselves, alas! are known to fluctuate, some branches of them drooping in their reputation, or else the knowledge of them being forgotten, yet the human mind acquiesces not in the thought of their fame altogether failing, or, because of some apparent inconsistencies, that the connection they have with one another, and, when well understood, their perfect harmony, may be overlooked. *Reminiscence* of their original, and their rational foundation, inspires the more agreeable persuasion and confidence of their being transmitted from age to age; and, amongst with them, the memory of their improvers. Thus it is, that, although what is human and mortal cannot be stable, and always the same, like that which is divine and immortal, there is, in the inferior nature, a manifest emulation of the higher; and, where actual immortality is unattainable to man here below, the image of it is eagerly and constantly pursued.

Hence

* In Convivio, vel de Amore.

Hence the love of glory, and of fame after death, is seen to animate the minds of men to such a degree, that, for its sake, no toils or dangers are accounted too great to be undergone. The flame, indeed, is most alive, and brightest, in the noblest minds; in those men, whose lives and actions give them assurance that they shall be ever remembered with honour and applause. So it shone forth in *Alcestis*, the spouse of Admetus, when, for his recovery from a dangerous sickness, she made a voluntary surrender of her life. It was felt by Achilles, when, to revenge Patroclus's death, he entered again into that martial strife, which he knew would inevitably prove fatal to him. Codrus, also, testified its influence, when, in order to obtain a victory for his country, he threw himself upon the swords of the enemy. The more singular these, and others, appeared in virtuous action, the more eminently they showed themselves possessed of the natural desire of an immortality *in fame*; since, beyond the date of mortals, their present being could not be prolonged. To these may be added the distinguished poets, such as Homer and Hesiod, the fathers of a nobler progeny than that of natural children; and whose productions have told to many generations with what minds and imaginations their authors were endowed. Wise legislators, also, may be taken into the catalogue; they who, by their deep study of human nature, and their superior understanding of what was perfective of it, became the reformers and conservators of whole communities of men, and, therefore, had given to them, while they lived, the pledges of a long enduring fame.

But, if more addicted to contemplation than action, and more recollected than enterprising in the affairs of life, the philosopher in solitude, or only conversant with a few, would prosecute his study of the supreme and ultimate good, let him lay the foundation in the culture and improvement of the principle of *love* in his soul, that powerful principle, by which all things in nature are actuated, and all creatures, in their various capacities, are swayed. In the rational part of them, its object is that which is fair and good. Let him begin, then, with observing the beautiful in bodily forms, the lines that mark, and the arrangement of these lines, by which their beauty is composed. When, from the survey

vey of one pattern of it *, he passes to another, and a third, and finds that its signatures, in each of them, are similar, he may rationally conclude, that there is a beauty which is one and the same in every corporeal species. He will not, therefore, be captivated with one of them more than another, nor prefer one species to another, but raise his thoughts and admiration to that general idea of beauty which appears to be common to, and diffused amongst them all. But, with more efficacy will the beauty perceptible in *minds* present itself to him, and peculiarly engage his regard, as being the source of that which is corporeal and visible, and fraught with manifold charms. It can be produced in himself and in others, be contemplated and contemplate, receive lustre and give it, and beget a mutual and lasting intercourse of the same delights and joys. The laws that bind societies together, the offices to be performed in civil life, and between one man and another, are regarded as exhibitions of this mental beauty, and, being attentively studied by the enamoured philosopher †, they are taught to others; who, along with him, behold in them the connection and uniformity of all the perfect virtues, and see, as in a mirror, that to be prudent, to be just, and to be temperate, is to possess, and to be adorned, with the fairest rays and lustre of beauty.

To increase yet more the sequestered philosopher's love and relish of that beauty peculiar to the intelligent mind ‡, the contemplation of the more abstract sciences offers itself to him. It furnishes the steps by which he may ascend to views of what is divinely fair in the constitution of the heavens. Through these celestial fields, indeed, the range is wide; and, in this life, the circuit of them cannot be made: Yet, from progressive speculation, it may with assurance be collected, that there exists *one* essential *pulchritude*, which is itself an *ocean*, as comprehending every species of beauty visible in body, or intelligible in mind, in divine wisdom, or in human science. From it every semblance, every trace, every shadow of what is comely in the world is derived, but without diminution of its unchangeable plenitude. The vision of it, if attainable
to

* In Convivio.

† In Convivio.

‡ Apuleius de Dogmate Platonis, 8vo edit. tom. 2.

to any in mortal condition, must be by the eye of the mind being opened in the manner pointed out; and, if once beheld, the images of beauty, before conceived, will be rendered faint amidst its inimitable splendor; and so, also, will the attractions to all other objects of love be abated in the soul. Perfected, in so high a degree, may the *assimilation* to God be in the *man*, who, by his rational exertions, by his unwearied study and meditation of truth, and his successful teaching of it to others, proves himself not the theorist only of exalted science, but the producer, in himself, and others, of the moral and divine virtues. Accounted, therefore, and called, he must be the lover and imitator of God; or that elevated *being*, whose soul and mind bear the image of the immortal and divine nature; and thence, surely, is reached the dignified aim and end of his life and actions.

If, not in respect of absolute excellence and dignity, but of competency, eligibility, and general usefulness to mankind, the precise question be put, whether the contemplative life, or the active one, is most to be preferred? an answer to it may be made without difficulty *, and from recollection of what has been already advanced. The two faculties of man, for the one and the other life, it has been said, are joined together in human nature, and cannot be altogether separated. They have, in regard to good, and utility in life, a necessary connection with, and a constant influence upon, each other. Unless, therefore, an estimate were to be made of these faculties in a separate view †, of their vigour and extent in particular men, and the greater or less operation they might have in different circumstances, the determination of the question either way must be vague and unsatisfactory; and thus the positive and just one only can be, that contemplation, joined with action, or that life in which both faculties are exerted, is to be chosen as the *desirable* one, and the *best*.

In what political state of society men may be governed in the happiest manner, is another point which bears some analogy to the preceding one. Ever since legislators and laws have been known, the disputable question has been stated: And no wonder it should have so happened; since,

* In Philebo.

† Maximus Tyrius, in Dissert. 6.

since, beside the subject being of arduous discussion, and requiring the greatest extent of human wisdom *; the most intelligent founders of laws and states have not conceived the same, but different notions of the purposes and ends of their institution. By some of them, the main end proposed has been victory in war; and, by others, the advancement of the arts of peace. Foreign commerce has been enjoined in one community, and prohibited in another. Hence the laws of Minos in Crete, and of Lycurgus in Sparta, differed, in their political principle, from those of Solon in Athens; and yet more from those of Charondas in Carthage. Neither is this disagreement to be accounted for from the varying circumstances of these states. What regard was paid to this consideration appears to have been only a secondary one; whilst the assumed principle, whether that of war or of peace, was, without examination of its rectitude or utility, made the basis and directory of all the particular regulations, disciplines, usages, and manners of the people, as a political community. In the one system, fortitude was weighed against prudence and justice, and allowed to preponderate; and, in the other, intemperance in pleasure, and the desire of wealth, in opposition to bravery, was admitted to have a similar ascendancy. Evident it is, that, in each of them, an extreme was gone into, and an error committed. But, without particularly examining which error was the worst, it may be advanced as a general truth, that war is studied and undertaken, not for its own sake, but for obtaining peace; and that to promote the former, the latter is seldom sought after. But, neither is peace itself, although a desirable object, to be regarded as the sole end of legislation. It may be attended with evils no less pernicious to the community than those of war. The wisdom of the legislator must, therefore, in a great measure, consist in preventing, as much as possible, or in remedying the distresses, or the corruptions, incident either to the warlike or the peaceful state of the commonwealth. To train the minds and bodies of the citizens in such a manner, that they may not decline the hardships of the field, nor be indifferent to the sweets of domestic repose, and to render the laws and institutions of government productive of this nice
contemperament

* De Legibus, lib. 1.

contemperament of pain and pleasure, must be the effort of his mind, and the proof of his political genius. In vain will this be attempted, according to the maxims of the legislators that have been mentioned, and who do not appear to have founded their policy upon *virtue*, as a general principle, but only to have made choice of that species of it, accounted by them either the most splendid, or the most profitable, or the most agreeable. When we consider what prepossessions even the wisest of men are apt to entertain in favour of this, or that kind of virtue, and that its partial exercise can only produce the partial attainment of public or private good; it is surely requisite to lay a broader foundation; and, if we would thoroughly inquire into the happiest state of civil society, to have it in contemplation what the united power of the virtues may accomplish; and whether that community which is most enlightened with virtuous principles, and most prompted to the exercise of them, does not abound with every benefit, divine and human, attainable by men.

Upon taking this view of the question about the most preferable civil government, and considering it to be the same with inquiring, what is the best state of political society, it appears that Plato, for the resolution of it, composed his ten books of a *republic*; the scheme of which, however visionary, gave him opportunity to hold forth, and display, in all their extent, his theological and moral, in connection with his political principles. The former, he knew, could in no shape be so effectually recommended to the attention of the Greeks, as by placing them in a treatise upon a *republican* form of government, represented as the most perfect of any. The very idea, although merely speculative, was to them a most pleasing and acceptable one; and, therefore, under favour of it, he introduces often, and in a more copious strain than in his other dialogues, sketches of his most abstruse theories, or sublime doctrines. In his books of laws, which properly exhibit his scheme of the best policy in a state, he is more reserved upon these subjects. Yet, even there, he still carries, though more succinctly, his great principles along with him; and, as if he disclaimed entering upon the question about the best government, when stated separately from them, he delivers it as his fixed sentiment, and what could not be controverted, that mankind, in no ci-

vil establishment, could be governed to the best advantage, unless their kings or rulers were philosophers, or philosophers placed in the functions of magistracy.

Were we to give credit to ancient tradition, and the poets, kingly government was the primitive one amongst men; but it was a government divine, in which a divinity presided *; a reign called that of Saturn, and the Golden Age of the World, so celebrated in poetic song; and that the elapse was the more to be deplored, because its return was not to be expected, until a revolution of the spheres, in a direction the reverse of the present, took place. The superintendence of mankind, say they, was subsequently committed to other divinities; and Jupiter, Apollo, and Minerva, were held to be the several revealers of the Cretan, Spartan, and Athenian laws. Plato, although he criticises these laws, admits that they could not proceed from an inferior authority. He takes occasion, however, in one of his books of laws †, to trace the progress of human society, from its rudest state in dispersed families, inhabiting the caverns of mountains, to their associations in larger tribes, and their confederacies in towns, slightly fenced with mounds of earth, or impalements of wood, which, in time, became populous and walled cities. The natural effect of these combinations is marked, by him, with the accuracy and the ability of a philosopher; and the political variations resulting from their several stages are pointed out so distinctly, that the origin of almost every known form of government may be deduced from his observations. Applicable they are allowed to be, not only to the rise of the different states in Greece, but also to the policies of other nations. In estimating the comparative excellence of any civil government, he observes, that the public education, and discipline, of its members was ever to be regarded as the surest test of their perfection; and that this discipline must always proceed upon the purest and foundest maxims of morality. With attention to this, he shows, that the advancement, or the decline, of regal, as well as popular governments, was closely connected; and he exemplifies the truth of his assertion from the revolutions that ensued in the Persian monarchy after the death of Cyrus; which

* Dialog. de Regno, vel Civilis.

† De Legibus, lib. 4.

which were not terminated until the promotion of Darius Hystaspes to the royalty, who applied some remedies to the defects of education amongst the princes and nobles.

Amongst all the ancient principalities, or regal governments, he affirms, that there was hardly one in which despotism, or the exercise of arbitrary power, was known; and that the just portrait of the sway of these princes * might be seen in the old poets, and in Homer, who gives to Agamemnon, as titles of the same import, those of *king* of men, and *pastor* of the people. Of all other civil governments, he alledges, that the regal and the popular ones were to be accounted the sources; the rest being no more than several compositions of these two †. If we include, in the numeration of the governments, the abuse into which each of them may be converted, the sum of their kinds will be six. Thus, we may reckon a government of *one person*, and the corruption of it, which is *tyranny*; and that of an *Aristocracy*, or of a select body of the citizens, resolvable, by abuse, into an *Oligarchy*, or the domination of a few of them; and, lastly, a *Democracy*, in which the whole community of citizens hath supremacy in legislation and rule. Its degeneracy, as various, has no particular mark, and we can only assign to it that which is common to the changes in the others, *transgression of the laws*. The regal government might be accounted the most preferable; if kings were to be found, like those of the *bee hives*, endowed by nature with all the qualities requisite for sovereign sway: But, as matters are otherwise ordered amongst mankind, their civil communities must be allowed to consult for the general good, and, having invested senates, or councils, with authority for framing a body of laws, to take measures for their due administration.

When Plato considered the fluctuation of the states of Greece between one and another of these political forms, he judged that a monarchy, governed by written laws ‡, was more eligible than any of them for the enjoyment of life; but, if it was intemperate and arbitrary, that it was the most grievous and intollerable to its subjects. Amongst the commonwealths, he declares an *Aristocracy* the most, and *Democracy* the

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least,

* In Minoe, ad fin.

† In Dialog. de Regno.

‡ Ibid.

least, desirable; unless upon a corruption of the other republican forms; and then the popular one might be the *best* of the *bad*. A *seventh* government, however, is described by him; in which a king, held sacred like the Egyptian monarch, and holding inviolable the salutary laws, that he, in council with the wisest of the state, had enacted, might well preside as supreme ruler, and revive, in a great measure, the image of the reign of Saturn. In his political speculations, therefore, it appears that Plato was no enthusiast, either for republican or monarchial government, farther than as humanity, and public virtue, and public good, might be conceived to be most regarded and advanced in the one, or in the other. His enthusiasm was, evidently, for the prevalence of philosophy, and that of the moral kind, inseparably connected with the civil improvement, and best discipline of men; a species of enthusiasm, of all others the most allowable and the noblest, which the true philosopher, as the friend and the lover of the human race, cherishes in his soul; whilst the political bigot adores his illiberal and home-spun creed, or exults, not in the benevolence, but in the imagined ingenuity, or novelty of his system.

From attention to the recital of Plato's political opinions, we had almost omitted what is advanced by him upon the subject of *law* in general *, and about bearing injury †. In a philosophic view, and according to strict reasoning, law, says he, as *law*, is not to be defined the *institute* of this or that particular community, which may be differently framed in one city, and another, no more than we would properly define gold by the variable form, or size of any particular portion of it; or *speech* by the things that are spoken; or *sight* by the things that are seen. To speak, to see, to hear, are organs, or faculties of the senses, by means of which we hold discourse, or are enabled to perceive, distinguish, and declare, the difference of objects. Every civil *institute*, or ordinance, is a declaration of something enacted, or required as a legitimate rule of government. But what is it that makes it legitimate, and according to a rule? Not, surely, the bare declaration. In order to its being accounted such, there must be a persuasion that it is founded in reason, and

* In *Minos*.

† In *de Legibus*, lib. 5.

and may be scientifically explained, like a maxim in any rational art or science. A *law*, therefore, is, in its proper sense, an *invention* of truth, which is one and the same in all ages and nations. When it corresponds not to this distinction, it may be called a decree, a requisition, or an edict, but not a legitimate rule or law, proceeding upon reason. But how, then, it may be said, have communities of men differed so widely in their civil institutions, and some of them admitted that to be a legal and just appointment which others have reprobated? Error, with respect to what is true, and what is right, is indeed too common with men; but do we, therefore, conclude that truth, and rectitude, and justice, are variable, according to their different opinions? The wisdom of legislation ceases not to be found with the wise, or those who have profoundly studied the political science, although, with others, it may be an unknown and unsearchable mystery. The laws, therefore, of able legislators have been distinguished from false imitations of them in the world; and antiquity has reported their authors to have been assisted in their intelligence by the gods.

Of all the civil virtues, as *Justice* is the principal, so, of the vices *, injustice, or the commission of injury, is the worst. To a philosopher, there are several arguments that will present themselves †, sufficient to convince him that it is better to suffer than to do an injury. In the case of wrong being done to him, he may even be made sensible that retaliation, which is always attended with violence, is not the best way to discredit, or to restrain the prevalence of wrath and outrage in society. But, with him, it will be a main argument to *respect himself*, and to maintain an equal temper of mind. He who inflicts pain upon another, must himself feel the resentful passion, or, at least, lose that balance of his temper and affections, which a true philosopher will ever account a prejudice to him of the worst kind. By it he will lose what is far more valuable to him than the possession of wealth, the calm and agreeable reflection, that, through life, he has neither been injurious, nor created distress to any around him. Whether it be, that the very infirmity of old age itself may require this pleasing review of his conduct; or whether,

* In Gorgia.

† In Repub. lib. 1.

ther, in the anxious days of life drawing near to its end, the doctrine, often formerly derided by him as an idle tale, that there are shades below for the punishment of the unjust, may then so far affect his imagination as to make it appear a doubtful point; in every such situation of body, or mind, he can take to himself, or receive from others, no consolation, in any degree equal to that of recollecting, that he has done injury or injustice to no man; nor has been perfidious in his vows to the gods; or disingenuous or unfaithful in his promises and engagements, either to individuals, or societies of mankind. In Pindar's strain, this consciousness of integrity and innocence is the sweetest nurse, and the most soothing hope of failing age. To beget such a sense of the difference of being just, or being injurious, Plato reckoned, that the moral discipline prescribed in his *republic* might be effectual. In the less perfect form of civil society, sketched out in his books of *Laws* *, he refines not, in the same manner, upon the topic of bearing injuries, but delivers a proper, yet a varied sentiment. "Worthy to be honoured," says he, "is the man who commits no injury; and still more deserving is he, who suffers it not to be done to any person, without giving information of what he knows of it to the public magistrate: But most of all is the man to be applauded, who joins himself to the administrator of justice, and assists him with all his power in prosecuting and punishing the oppressive and injurious." The virtues are distinguished by Plato into the imperfect and perfect kinds; the former being those of nature's giving †, and the latter acquired by discipline, and the lessons of reason and philosophy; and the same virtues are called by him *mediocrities*, as well as *heights*; because they have neither redundancy nor defect. But these distinctions, and some other properties of the virtues mentioned by him, need not be insisted upon; since such of them as deserve attention will be found to obtain it in other theories of Ethics, that are to be displayed. Here, then, we conclude the account of his moral doctrine, and, with it, our whole survey of the Platonic philosophy.

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* De Legib. *ibid.*

† Apuleius de Dogmate Plat. lib. 1.

To the particular remarks upon this philosophy, it may be added as a general one, that, however erroneous and reprehensible in some of its doctrines, it hath, in respect of its theological and moral principles, a marked pre-eminence above any other in the Grecian schools, and which might well entitle Plato to be called by the distinguishing name of the *divine* philosopher. The views it affords of the goodness, the wisdom, and the providence of the Deity, must be owned worthy of admiration *. There is a considerable authority for asserting that Plato held the opinion, not of matter being ungenerated, or co-existent with the Divinity, as stated in the *Timaeus*, but that God made the world visible, and invisible, out of no pre-existing subject; his will alone being sufficient for the constitution of things. How far his theory of the triple world may be considered as a system of theology and morals, more sublime, and more connected in its principles, than any of the speculative ones subsequent to it, will best appear by comparing it with that of Aristotle, which bears the nearest affinity to it, and yet exhibits important variations; and to the account of which we now proceed.

PART

* Hierocles de Providentia et Fato, ex Photii Bibliotheca.

P A R T VI.

S E C T I O N I.

*Of Aristotle.—His institution of the Lycaenum, and the fame of his School.—
The Stile of his Writings; and the fate that for some time befel his
Works.—His Principal Successors in the Lyceum.*

ARISTOTLE was the son of Nicomachus and Phaestias; and Stagira, a small town in *Thrace*, inhabited by a Grecian colony, the place of his nativity. His parents derived their pedigree from Machaon *, the son of Æsculapius, celebrated by Homer † both as a physician and a hero; and Nicomachus, inheriting from him the healing art, exercised it in the court of Amyntas, father to Philip King of Macedon. His illustrious son is reckoned to have been born to him in the first year of the 99th Olympiad, and to have attended Plato's Academy in the 17th year of his age. He is said to have been of a slender make in his person, and to have had small eyes, a weak voice, if not a defective articulation. His first appearance amongst the academicians drew their remarks on the singular finery of his dress, from his wearing rings, and other ornaments: But Plato, observing his steady application to scienti-

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 4.

† Iliad, lib. 11.

fic study, and his rapid progress in its various branches, had soon reason to pronounce him the *daemon* or *genius* of the Academy *. Yet, although he obtained this distinguishing appellation, he rendered not himself the favourite disciple of his master. A look or air, expressive of scorn, whether natural to him, or assumed, joined with a pertinacity in argument, created a dislike of his colloquial disputations amongst his associates, and became disagreeable to Plato himself. He continued, however, his attendance upon the Academic lectures for the course of near twenty years.

While Plato yet taught in the Academy, Aristotle withdrew to Mitylene, where philosophy had its professors; and, upon Speucippus's succeeding to the regency of the Athenian school, despair of rivaling, by any institution of his, the matchless fame derived to it by Plato, seems to have occasioned his betaking himself to a private retreat †. This he found in its most eligible form, in consequence of the friendship he had contracted, at the Academy, with Hermias, Prince of Atarna, in Mysia. But the felicity of it was terminated, at the end of three years, by the unhappy fate that befel his associate in it. His regret of Hermias's death was testified by the most ardent expressions. He wrote a hymn to his memory, under the title of *A Poean*; and dedicated a statue to him in the temple of Delphos. Another proof he gave of his affectionate regard to the family of his deceased friend was no less conspicuous; although we may well suppose that he followed his natural inclination in giving it. He espoused Hermias's virtuous sister, when divested of a large inheritance, and reduced to apparent want. His love of her approached to adoration. His fame for scientific knowledge was now spread abroad; and Philip, the father of Alexander, already acquainted with the character of Nicomachus, and his family, thought it a most fortunate circumstance that he had a son, in the public opinion, so thoroughly qualified to take the charge of the education of the Prince of Macedon ‡. The letter he wrote, giving Aristotle the invitation to this office of honour and trust, discovered the noble sentiments Philip entertained of the value of literature, and of the eminent proficients in it.

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* Philoponus de Mundi Æternit.

† Ibid.

‡ Aulus Gellius.

“ I may transmit to him the sceptre,” said he, “ but you can render him worthy of it.” Alexander was then in his fifteenth year ; and his admitted preceptor exceeded, by one or two years, that of his fortieth.

The charge committed to Aristotle was executed by him with equal ability and diligence. Erudition, in all its parts, was unfolded by him to his pupil ; who discovered a particular fondness for Natural History, and the knowledge of Medicine. But he was, most of all, captivated with reading the Iliad of Homer ; which occasioned his preceptor to take upon himself the task of amending various errors in the text, and to present his pupil with a correct copy of that immortal work. Alexander put the highest value upon it, laid it always under his pillow, and found, at last, a repository most suitable to it in a casket of the richest perfumes, selected from the spoils of Darius’s tent. By Aristotle, no less attention was paid to the forming the *morals* of his pupil, and communicating to his mind the principles and sentiments of virtue and generosity. He continued in the exercise of his charge for eight years, equally respected by the King * and his son, until Alexander, after his accession to the throne, made his warlike preparations for invading the Persian empire. Aristotle, whose constitution was rather infirm than robust, and who could not disengage himself from the studies of a philosopher, nor quit his prospects of fame in that profession, obtained leave to betake himself to Athens, the eminent seat of the Muses, and the delightful resort of the votaries of literature.

To enter into a particular discussion of the question, how far Aristotle’s reputation was concerned in recommending to Alexander’s confidence his relation, and disciple, Calisthenes, who was acquainted with Hermolaus’s conspiracy against the monarch, and concealed it, at least for a time, would be introducing an *episode* that belongs to history to insist upon, and would too much engross our present narrative. It is,

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therefore,

* Amongst other rewards and gratuities from Philip, it is said, that Aristotle obtained that of having Stagira, fallen to desolation, rebuilt by the King’s order. There was also, near Mieza in Macedonia, a place of *study* constructed for him ; and, in Plutarch’s time, its seats of stone, and shaded walks, were still shown to the curious.

therefore, sufficient to observe, that, as Aristotle had his enemies, who spread the story of his sending to Cassander some of the water of *Styx*, in order to poison the King *, so Calisthenes's behaviour was turned by them into an impeachment of his fidelity. It does not appear that Alexander extended his suspicion to Aristotle, or conceived any such unfavourable impression of his conduct, as the contrary allegation would infer. The son of Philip was not a dissembler, like his father. But, in place of evidences of disgust, coolness, or disregard, which he would have readily shown, we find the testimonies of his good will, and respect to his former preceptor, continued, in the correspondence, by letters, he held with him †; in making, at the request of the philosopher, his conquests subservient to discoveries in natural history, and procuring, and transmitting to Greece, at a vast expence, that rare collection of Asiatic animals, of every species, for Aristotle's inspection, and to enable him to compile that admired methodical treatise of their various structure and generation found in his works; but which, being only a part of his ingenious labour, makes that which is lost to be still justly regretted.

During Xenocrates's regency in the Academy, and in the second year of the 111th Olympiad, Aristotle made his appearance in Athens, and, with signal reputation, instituted his school, called the *Lycaeum* ‡, from a place in the suburbs where it was held, and which had been fitted up by Pericles as a *gymnasium*, for the exercise of the military men of the city. Its *porticos*, and covered walks, upon the banks of the *Ilyseus*, being much frequented, had also procured it the name of the *Peripaton*; Aristotle's disciples, who had their stated hours of perambulation there, and were generally observed to hold, at the same time, their colloquial arguments, soon had the appellation of the *Peripatetic* philosophers assigned them; and which, afterwards, became the distinguishing one of his followers. As the number of the students in the *Lycaeum* increased, its founder saw the propriety of following the method adopted by Xenocrates in the Academy, for their general discipline. An Archon was chosen

* Plutarch in *Alex. vita.*

† Plin. *Hist. Natur.* lib. 8. cap. 17.

‡ Suidas in voce, *Lexicon*, fol. edit. pag. 486. Cicero, *Academ. Quaest.* lib. 1. Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

chosen from amongst themselves, every ten days, to superintend the due observance * of the stated rules of the school; which, being thus authorised, and supported by every student in his turn, were put upon the most favourable footing for obedience. Scientific lectures were given, and exercises prescribed to the students †, both in the Dialectic and Rhetorical form; yet a great difference was made in the manner of communicating the doctrines of philosophy. To one class of hearers, or the generality of them, Aristotle delivered what were called his *Exoterica*, or such an explication of his principles as was suited to ordinary capacities, that could understand the *το οτι*, the superficial common place argument, but had not penetration enough for the *δι οτι*, or the more accurate and abstruse reasoning upon the point. To other approved and confidential disciples were imparted his *Esoterica*, or *Acroammatica*, or those studied and profound discussions of the argument, which showed the genius of the master, and his ability in displaying the truth of his tenets ‡. So far did the ancient opinion still prevail in the schools, that the depths of philosophy were not only inaccessible to common understandings, but ought to be reserved for the information of men of a certain rank in civil society. In the persuasion that Aristotle, by some publication he made, had transgressed this maxim, Alexander wrote him a chiding letter. He, it seems, who conquered whole nations, still distrusted his ascendancy over them, if any, but a few men, were permitted to equal him in knowledge, or the gifts of the mind.

The application given by the disciples of the Lycaeum to every kind of literary and ingenious study was most remarkable. So intent were they upon proficiency, that, from their constant perusal of a variety of books, which Aristotle had taken care to collect, the eleves of the Academy called them the *readers*; as they themselves devoted more of their time to contemplation. Their instructor is said, by Strabo ||, to have been the first who formed a regular library; and that Ptolemy Philadelphus was directed by him as to the proper method of arranging the celebrated

* Ammonius in Vita Aristot.

† Cicero de Oratore.

‡ Clemens Alexandrin. Strommata, lib. 5.
in Vita Alexandri.

Aulus Gellius, lib. 22. Plutarch.

|| Lib. 13.

celebrated one which he founded. That Aristotle might suggest, and exhibit the best disposition of literary works, in any collection of them, may well be allowed; but that no considerable libraries were known before his time, is neither probable, nor consistent with the accounts of history *, which mention several princes, and private persons of an anterior age, who distinguished themselves by making collections, and having repositories of books. But whatever advantage Aristotle derived from his access to an extensive perusal of the literary works of others, this can be only reckoned an accidental help to the display of the amazing powers of reason and reflection which he naturally possessed, and that may be said to have qualified him to survey, with the discerning eye of a philosopher, every object of human understanding. In fact, we know that he extended his inquiries to almost all the phenomena which the natural world presents, or the mind of man conceives to be subjects of rational, scientific, or curious investigation. But we say not, with some of his extravagant admirers †, that he treated them in a manner so complete, as to surpass every known exertion of the human intellect, and exceeded all preceding philosophers in his inventions. This eulogium is not to be admitted but partially, and with considerable reserve; since, in Physics, he did no more than trace the same ground, and insist upon principles analogous to those of his predecessors. Fertile he was in the invention and subtilty of his arguments, but not in the conception of such great principles as render their authors real originals in science, and are found to afford new lights for discoveries and improvements in some or all of the most important branches of philosophy.

The merit and praise he must be allowed of introducing, and exemplifying, a stricter method of philosophizing than what had been before observed in the schools of science. In every doctrine, and theory, he excluded mixtures of poetic and fabulous parts ‡, which, in some degree;

* Amongst them are reckoned Polycrates of Samos, Pisistratus of Athens, Euclid of Megara, Euripides the poet, and several Kings of Pergamus.

† Ammonius in Vita.
Categoriis.

‡ Simplicius in Prooem. ad librum de

gree, still prevailed ; and he endeavoured to subject every hypothesis, or position, to the scrutiny of reason and argument. He framed, with penetration and acuteness superior to all others, the rules of just reasoning, and of the proof demonstrative, and incontestible. When this his accurate manner of philosophising was considered, together with the universality of his genius, that appeared to meet every subject of study with a like faculty of intelligence, and his elaborate performances upon the different parts of philosophy, some of the ablest judges in antiquity, when his works came to be perused by them, hesitated not to pronounce him the most excellent in all science *, and the Prince of Philosophers. But did this encomium imply their approbation of his physical and moral theories, as, upon the whole, in reason, or truth, preferable to all other systems of philosophy ? By no means ; unless we understand by the *judges*, those who were of his school, and professed a rigid adherence to his doctrines ; and, even amongst those under the name of attached disciples, there was not, nor could there well be, an entire assent to all his tenets and positions ; since some of them were but obscurely, or not sufficiently, explained in his *Esoterics* ; and hence we shall find his immediate successors in the Lycaum at disagreement, and, in some points, plainly dissenting from him. Cicero, who speaks of Aristotle in the magnificent terms referred to †, and which seem equivalent to the exalting him above all the professors of science, declares he must always be understood to except Plato. The philosophers of other sects, who commented on parts of his works which they thought most ingenious, did not, therefore, espouse his general principles, or acknowledge him their master in philosophy. Such servile adoration he did not obtain, until a dark age of literature came, in which their being as little of liberal inquiry, as of genius for philosophy, its disciples were disposed to embrace

* Atque inter hunc Aristotelem, et illos, hoc mihi visum est interesse, (says Cicero), quod ille, eadem acie mentis, quo rerum omnium *vim*, *naturamque* viderat, haec quoque aspexit. De Oratore, lib. 2. And again, Cum omnis ratio diligens differendi duas habet partes, unam inveniendi, alteram judicandi ; utriusque *princeps*, ut mihi quidem videtur, Aristoteles fuit. In Topicis, init.

† Aristoteles longe omnibus, (*Platonem semper excipio*), praeſtans et ingenio, et diligentia. Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 1.

brace him as an infallible guide ; and, revering him as an *oracle*, to believe, that, where his text was obscure, it was to be explained into some profound meaning ; which, being inexpressible by any known words, might be denoted by new invented ones, that had either a very dubious sense, or no meaning at all. And thus, at length, was Aristotle, some of whose nice distinctions afforded a handle to these fictions, *enthroned* as the first philosopher by the schoolmen of the later ages.

For thirteen years he continued to teach philosophy in the Lycaean with much approbation ; yet not with the extended fame of the Academic discipline. The style of his lectures, especially when compared with that of Plato, was accounted, by some, frigid and abrupt ; but it is acknowledged to be that species of diction which is most adapted to subjects of philosophy, when treated with accuracy ; and, in Cicero's judgment, beside being nervous and concise, it wanted not that agreeable fluency * which marks a rich vein without superfluous ornaments ; for, in the knowledge and use of apt and copious expression, he might be ranked with the first of the rhetoricians. The obscurities, therefore, imputable to him, arose not from a defective, but a studied brevity of style, and from various distinctions, either ideal or logical, of ambiguous explication, or incomprehensible. Whether, on account of his expressing himself too freely with respect to some tenets of the common theology, or that the priests of Ceres were, at any rate, disposed to suspect so profound a philosopher, he incurred their animadversion, and a charge of impiety was drawn up against him. He is said to have been the first who wrote a defence of himself in answer to such a *judicial* accusation, in which he was encouraged by his friends to persist ; but he chose not to abide the precarious issue of the trial †. " I wish not," said he, " to see the Athenians

* *Quibus eo minus ignoscendum est, quod non modo rebus iis, quae ab illo (Aristotele) dictae, et inventae sunt, allici debuerunt ; sed dicendi quoque, incredibili quadam cum copia, tum etiam suavitate ; In Topicis. Comparing him with the other writers on Rhetoric, he says, Ac tantum inventoribus ipsis, suavitate, et brevitate dicendi praeestitit, ut nemo illorum praecepta ex ipsorum libris cognoscat, sed omnes ad hunc, quasi ad quendam commodiorem explicatorem revertantur. Cicer. de Inventionem Rhetor. lib. 2.*

† *Aelian. Var. Hist. lib. 3.*

Athenians commit a *second* violence upon philosophy ;” alluding to the notorious one in the case of Socrates. He withdrew to Chalcis, in Euboea, near the Euripus, where his death ensued in the 3d year of the 114th Olympiad, at the age of sixty-three ; but the manner of it is variously, and fabulously related. The copy of his *last will* is one of several curious relicts of the distinct, but concise, form of ancient *testamentary* deeds, recorded by Diogenes Laertius ; and, if indited a short time before his death, may be reckoned an evidence that he died a natural one, and with the greatest composure.

The fortune that, for more than a century and a half befel his voluminous works, amounting, according to Laertius, to four hundred books, or separate treatises, was singular and surprising ; so that their escaping perdition appeared to be a matter merely accidental. They had been consigned, along with his library, to Theophrastus, who succeeded him in the Lycaean, and by him they were bequeathed to Neleus * ; who changed his residence from the Athenian territory to that of Troas. The heirs of the latter, ignorant of the valuable treasure that had fallen into their hands, considered the books as no more than a fashionable kind of household furniture, until they heard that the King of Pergamus ransacked all places for such writings. Fearing, then, that they might be violently seized upon †, they shut up the whole collection in a close humid cell. In this perishable condition they lay buried for a long time, and would, probably, never have been produced to the light, but for the vanity, more than for the love of literary study, which characterised Apellico, a rich disciple of the Peripatetic school : At Athens, it was part of his ostentation to collect books, and to purchase them at the dearest rate. The witless felons of philosophy heard of his *premiums*, and opened their vault. The volumes of Aristotle and Theophrastus were now brought forth to those he employed, with all the injuries of moths and mouldering upon them. Apellico caused them to be copied out ; but, in the obliterated places, this was done in a very imperfect manner ‡. His library, afterwards, became a part of Sylla’s pillage

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* Diog. Laert. in Vita Theophrasti.

† Strabo, lib. 13.

‡ Plutarch. in Vita Syllae.

of Athens, and was carried by him to Rome. Even there, neglect was still like to have followed the works of the Stagirite, and his disciple, if the attention of Tyrannio *, the famous grammarian, had not rescued them from it. The curators of Sylla's library required much importunity and sollicitation for leave to take copies of them when discovered. The transcribers Tyrannio could employ were but illiterate and undiligent ones; so that, in a performance which required more than ordinary knowledge and pains, if some errors were corrected, we may well suppose that various others would be committed by them †. Under these disadvantages, the productions of Aristotle's genius remained in obscurity; and, in Cicero's time, were perused by very few of the philosophers themselves. Strabo and Plutarch observe, that the disciples of the Lycaean must have been, when so long deprived of these originals, at a loss to understand, in various respects, the principles of their master's philosophy, which they could only have communicated to them, *traditionally*, by his successors in the school. Their sect, therefore, in the *Augustan* age, made no considerable appearance at Rome; and, if Lucretius be excepted, scarcely do we find, amongst the Roman poets of that period, any allusion to the Stagirite's doctrines, or philosophical fame. This observation, indeed, is not to be extended to those Grecian philosophers who resorted to Rome in Augustus's reign; some of whom are mentioned by Simplicius and Ammonius, as having wrote expositions upon Aristotle. After Andronicus Rhodius's first publication of his works, in the best form he could produce them, and with a commentary, his example of studying, and illustrating them, was, in a short time, followed by several others.

Here much conjecture is formed about the reasons or motives which induced Aristotle and Theophrastus to forbear, during their life time, the publication of their works; the neglect, or non-performance of which, exposed them to the hazards that have been mentioned. It is one of those questions which ought to be dismissed as more curious than important;

* Cicer. Epist. ad Quintum Frat. lib. 2.

† Rhetor, autem, ille magnus, ut opinor, *Aristotelica* se ignorare, respondit: Quod quidem minime sum admiratus, eum philosophum Rhetori non esse cognitum, qui ab ipsis philosophis, praeter admodum paucos, ignoretur. Ibid. in Topicis.

important; especially as the proper solution of it requires a knowledge of collateral facts and circumstances, with which we are altogether unacquainted. We know not, but from the construction of ancient authors, whether the matter proceeded from design, or from want of sufficient care. Provisions suitable, both for preserving their works, and for the convenient publication of them, may have been made by the one and the other philosopher, and yet some unforeseen and uncommon accident have caused a disappointment of their purposes. But the current persuasion was, that either respect to Plato, whose philosophical opinions, in several points, were impugned, or else a diffidence of success in a competition with him, who then stood upon the summit of literary fame, was the occasion of, at least, a temporary delay, on the part of Aristotle and Theophrastus, about the delivery of their works to the public. The first allegation contradicts a noted practical apothegm *, which being first Plato's, was adopted by Aristotle; the second must be considered as an excess either of modesty or of prudence; and it is also connected with another point that deserves attention. With what measure not of respect only, but of justice, in stating their tenets, are we to reckon that Aristotle proceeded in his account of Plato's doctrines, and those of the many other philosophers mentioned by him †? In general, he is allowed to be just and exact in reciting their principles; and various of them would be, to us, indistinctly known, or altogether unintelligible, if his rehearsals were set aside. Yet the manner in which he criticizes them, without appearing arrogant and censorious, has been justly observed to be rather morose and detractive; and what one, more disposed to combat their opinions, than to give them a full and impartial explication, would be apt to assume. That he studied most the confutation of other philosophers, and showed singular ingenuity in it, with the manifest view of vacating the throne of science for his own ascension, according to the remark of a great modern restorer of learning, cannot be denied. Notwithstanding the reverence paid by him to Pla-

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* *Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato; sed magis amica veritas.* Ammonius in Vita Arist.

† There are some exceptions, either to his justice, or his accuracy, which will be afterwards observed.

to's memory, and his often omitting his name when he controverts his doctrines, his antipathy to *Platonism* is sufficiently evident. Whether his own system placed science and philosophy in a more advantageous light, will best appear from the survey to be taken of it.

Aristotle's successor in the Peripatetic school was Theophrastus, his favourite disciple, whose first name, *Tyrtamus*, of harsh pronunciation, was changed by him into another, implying the divine excellence of his elocution *. Upon application by the students in the Lycaenum for the nomination of a Regent, when Aristotle was apparently threatened with death, the philosopher, knowing them to be divided in their sentiments with respect to the comparative merit of Theophrastus and Eudemus, signified his choice between them in a delicate manner. Calling for a cup of Lesbian, and another of Rhodian wine, as if for a trial of his taste for the one or the other, "*This*," said he, of the latter, "is strong, and pleasant enough; but the softer, and more palatable to me, is *that of Lesbos*," which was Theophrastus's country. His meaning was understood; and his determination generally applauded. His prudence, and great application to study, are equally commended; and Cicero calls him the most elegant and learned of the philosophers †. He was also liberal and beneficent; and his manners and character were in such general esteem in Athens, that, when Agonides presumed to accuse him of impiety, a prosecution for defamation was immediately admitted against himself. He continued, from the time of Aristotle's death, to teach philosophy, not in the Lycaenum, but in a private garden, presented to him by Demetrius Phalereus, who had the charge of the *Oligarchy*, set up in Athens by Cassander, the son of Antipater. He had generally an audience of two thousand students. The interruption which the Peripatetic, and other schools of philosophy, met with in his time, ceased at the end of a year; when Sophocles, the son of Amphiclidas, the procurer of the arbitrary decree against them, was himself condemned to pay a heavy fine. His engaging manner, joined with his extensive knowledge in philosophy, procured him the friendship of Cassander,

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 5. p. 290. Aulus Gellius. Cicero in Oratore.

† Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 5. p. 181.

sander, and of Ptolemy, the son of *Lagos*. The comic poet Menander is said to have been his disciple *. The many volumes composed by him were a testimony what his master's tuition, favoured by his happy genius, could accomplish in literature. In the account of several natural phenomena, he differed from Aristotle; and some other subjects were more fully illustrated by him. In his treatise on a *Happy Life*, he is criticized by Cicero, for ascribing too much, and more than his master had done †, to fortune, and exterior circumstances; whence the felicity of the man of virtue was rendered, in a degree beyond what it ought justly to be accounted, dependent upon them. In the last period of life, and when he had attained to the age of eighty-five, he complained that men's lives fell short of those of the deer and the ravens; and, by that abbreviation, their proficiency in wisdom and in virtue was prevented. Is it unseasonable, when the faculties for farther advancement in both are naturally, and generally, diminished?

Strato Lampfacensis, and *Lyco* of Troas, the disciples of *Theophrastus*, were his successors in the regency of the Lycaean, and they were followed by *Aristo Ceius*, *Critolaus Phaselites*, and *Diodorus*, with whom the account of the succession is reckoned to terminate ‡; although the school had several other reputed masters, or leaders of the sect. We carry our observations only to the first of them. The philosopher of Lampfacus followed neither the tract of science adopted in the school, nor the theories upon which Aristotle proceeded. He scarcely concerned himself with any of them but *Physics*; and, in them, his general principles were reduced within the shortest compass. For an *universal cause* of every thing *that is*, he sought no farther than to what may be called an *omnipotent nature*; in which, although void of sense, and formal

* *Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 5. p. 181.*

† *Theophrastus, autem, vir et oratione suavis, et ita moderatus, ut prae se, probitatem quandam et ingenuitatem ferat, vehementius etiam fregit veteris disciplinae auctoritatem; spoliavit enim virtutem suo decore, imbecillumque reddidit. Acad. Quaest. lib. 1.*

‡ *Demetrius Phalerius, learned in philosophic disputation, as well as an orator, Heraclides Ponticus, and Neleus, are reckoned amongst them. Diogen. Laert. ibid.*

mal being *, all energy, called *divine*, was to be found, and to which the occasion of every particular phenomena might be traced. In this wonderful hypothesis, so far as it can be turned into a meaning, the subject, and the accidents to it, are held to be one and the same; what is moved is also the mover; what is operated upon, operates; and the general cause of all things is no other way distinguished from an effect, but as it has the vague name of *nature* assigned to it. But *nature*, it seems, is to be considered as a *power*, or *force*, essential to *matter*, and diffused universally through all its portions and particles. Taken in this sense, *nature* must include two ideas of *being*, one passive, and the other active; unless we suppose power *active* upon no substance whatever, or nothing. There are, therefore, two principles of things, and not one alone, in the universe. *Yet, allowing that there is such a distinction made in our conceptions, they may still be regarded as one, essentially, since they are always found to be united.* Do we know, or can we pronounce any thing farther about the essence of matter, than that it is a *something*, having extension, or parts exterior to parts; and, if we join to this the idea of its solidity, or resistance to being penetrated or moved, it must be conceived, on that account, to oppose every change of its state, and to be the *contrary* to all *agency*. There are, therefore, no two ideas more distinguished by us than *power*, and the *matter* or subject upon which it acts. However conjoined in the visible world, however wonderfully connected in the human frame, we early learn to separate them in our conceptions, and to consider them as distinct principles of things, and so marked to us by different properties. To the knowledge of the essence of the one, or of the formal operations of the other, our ideas do not reach; and the philosopher's pretension to it may be classed with the crude notion of the peasant. Strato *Physicus* scorned, as a dream, Democritus's constitution of the world, and all bodies in it, from atoms, rough or smooth, angular or round, encountering one another in a *void*. His skill, it seems, lay more in the *mechanic* powers, and theories of the laws

* Nec audiendus ejus auditor Strato, is qui *Physicus* appellatur; qui *omnem vim divinam* in natura sitam esse censet; quae causas gignendi, augendi, minuendive habeat; sed careat omni sensu, et figura. Cicer. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

laws of motion. Let nature, says he, vested *only* with infinite force, be the universal agent, and it is *demonstrable* how all things *that are*, or *can be*, may be adjusted by her, and brought to an equilibrium. To exert her might, and give to the portions of matter all conceivable measures of impulse, is the whole that is requisite. A general arrangement will be the result. Every particle of matter will find its place according to the degree of its velocity, and have its gravity or levity, its descent or ascent, in exact proportion to it. There remain no specimens of Strato's theories of bodies in motion; but we may presume that this part of science was not better discussed by him than that of the powers of atoms was by other philosophers, whose systems he contemned *. His *nature*, however powerful it may be apprehended, would appear not over wise in *mechanics*, and the laws of motion, and, in his representation of her course, be found an inconsistent and fallacious architect of the world. In Cicero's opinion, the mechanic philosopher, and the physiologists †, alike displayed their ingenuity in vain, upon a subject so immense and complicated, as could not be properly surveyed by the human faculties, and in which a depth of obscurity must ever be found. But it appears to have been their great boast, that they could set aside a *deity*, or divine wisdom in the world, and yet show that the work of it might be done according to their shallow theories, or by the substitution of some name, in place of a real *being*, and an intelligent cause.

SECTION

* *Somnia censet (Strato) haec esse Democriti, non docentis sed optantis. Ipse autem singulas mundi partes persequens, quequid aut fit aut fiat, naturalibus fieri, aut factum esse, docet, ponderibus et motibus. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4.*

† *Ibid. Nec Stratoni tamen assentior.——Latent ista omnia, Luculle, crassis occulta et circumfusa tenebris; ut nulla acies humani ingenii tanta sit, quae penetrare in coelum, terram intrare possit: Corpora nostra non novimus; qui sint situs partium, quam vim quaeque pars habeat, ignoramus.*

SECTION II.

Of Aristotle's Division of the Parts of Philosophy.—His Dialectic, or Logic.—Its extent, as an Instrument of Science, considered.—His Ontology, or Metaphysics.

ARISTOTLE divided philosophy into two parts; the one respecting action, called *Practical*; the other, employed in contemplation, denominated *Theoretical* *. In the first, he comprehended *Ethics* and *Politics*; considering *Oeconomics* as a part of the latter. In the second, he included *Physics*, or the investigation of all substances, corporeal and incorporeal, with their attributes and accidents; and he subjoined the *Dialectic*, or, as it was afterwards called, *Logic*; which, although not properly reckoned a part of philosophy, he held to be the most perfect instrument of science †. He found, says Themistius, philosophy collected indeed into a body, but confusedly huddled together, and the kinds of arguments proper to one branch indiscriminately blended with those belonging to another. Into the different disputations, which, before his appearance, were as tumultuary as the armies of the *Medes* previous to *Cyaxares's* discipline of them, he knew how to introduce order and method. He was the first, adds Ammonius ‡, who separated the rules of reasoning from the points in question; and, by his delineation

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 5. 4to edit. pag. 238.
fol. edit. p. 168.

† In Aristot. Vita.

‡ In Oration. 33.

delineation of them, taught the exact and scientific method of demonstration, in the knowledge of which his predecessors were generally defective; so that they might be said to resemble men who could wear shoes, with little or no understanding how they were fabricated. These encomiums have chiefly a reference to the improvement, and, as it was accounted, the perfection, given by Aristotle to the dialectic, or that kind of proof of what was true, competent to science.

Dialectics, in the extensive sense of the term, and as it was used in the ancient philosophy, comprehended grammar, rhetoric, and *logic*; which last epithet was never singly put to signify what we now understand by that of *Logics*, or the art of reasoning. Whatever related to it is, even by Aristotle, expressed in two words, and called *dialectic reasoning* *; and he only speaks of treating a subject *logically*, or in the looser dialectic form, as distinguished from the stricter analytical one, or that of the *syllogism*. To ask who invented the dialectic art, or in what school of philosophy it was first taught? is the same thing as to inquire by whom, and where, any direction or rule, however simple, was first prescribed in stating a disputable question, or a proposition, and in giving a response to the one, and in admitting, or objecting to, the truth of the other? No school of science could subsist for any time in any credit, without some rules being observed, if not prescribed, with respect to this, which common reason would suggest; such as, that the question, or proposition, should be expressed in plain and intelligible terms; and that the answer should not be evasive, but direct, and to the purpose; and the admission, or negation, be either absolute, or with exception. When we are told by Simplicius †, and others, that *Archytas* of Tarentum had wrote a treatise upon the ten *genera*, or Categories, under the title of *περί τῶν κατηγοριῶν*, can a doubt be entertained, that the propriety and necessity of *dividing*, or separating, a question or proposition, as to its general import, from another, apparently analogous to it, and giving some definition of its terms, had been long before understood, and a convenient practice, in both these respects, followed in the Pytha-

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* Aristot. Post. Analytica, lib. 1. cap. 18. Categories.

† In Comment. ad

gorean schools? Can we suppose that Pythagoras, deeply conversant in arithmetic and geometry, and accustomed to the demonstrative proof, would not, sometimes, in physical and moral subjects, throw his reasoning into a syllogistical form, the same with, or equivalent to that used in logics? Every A is B: Every B is C: Therefore, every C is B: Or no A is B: Every C is A: Therefore, no C is B. Is it not rather presumable, that the masters and disciples, both of the Pythagoric, and Ionian schools, would, in the course of their disputations, not only often frame their arguments so as to coincide with these examples of the first figure of the syllogism, and one of its moods, but also exemplify its other two figures, and some of their moods, in a just manner*. Aristotle, while he claims the invention of the syllogistic rules, acknowledges that there were many examples of them to be found amongst the teachers of rhetoric and philosophy, although it appeared that they had not considered, or well understood, upon what principles they were constructed. He likewise alledges, that the mathematicians reasoned generally according to the first figure. By the time that Plato opened his Academy, what with the *dialectics* of Zeno Eleates, Parmenides †, Euclid of Megara, and his followers of the Eristic tribe, beside the improvements in definition made by Socrates, it appears, as has been shown in the Platonic philosophy, that reasoning in the syllogistic form, either categorical, or mixed, or hypothetical, was then commonly practised in the schools, and that a general theory of the Logical art, inaccurate, indeed, and incomplete, had obtained. There remained, therefore, that to be done, which, in every art or science, requires both ingenuity and precision. To *Logic* was to be given all the perfection it could receive; and this was what Aristotle performed to admiration.

It is, in reality, Aristotle's elucidation of the art of reasoning that is most to be admired, since the utmost reach of the art itself, as the *organon* of science, proved to be of no considerable extent. It emulates, indeed, and attains the certainty of mathematical demonstration, but requires an apparatus much more complex than what is needful in the science

* Sophist. Elench. cap. 34. Aristotle's Opera Omnia, Graec. et Lat. fol. edit. Aureliae, Allobrogum, pag. 252.

† Diogen. Laert. in Euclide, lib. 2.

science of numbers, or of geometry. We allude not, here, to the structure of the syllogism, in its legitimate figures and modes, but to the far less perspicuity of the ideas, and, consequently, of the terms expressing them, held forth in a logical proposition, compared with a mathematical one. Instead of a few clear definitions, such as we find in Euclid, we must look into the chapter of the ten Categories *, and there, perhaps, not find a term, under which that used in the proposition can be distinctly ranged. The commentaries upon what is meant by substance, and by qualities or accidents, are to be attended to. We must then, for ascertaining the relation the predicate has to the subject, have recourse to Aristotle's four *predicables* †, which, by other Logicians, were reckoned five in number; and, in either account of them, find a greater *desideratum* than in the Categories. But, allowing all this circumspection to be unnecessary, and that, by means of alphabetical signatures

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only,

* The Categories are said to be *univocal* terms, without any article prefixed, or note of composition joined to them, but to which names, and definitions, do in common belong: Each Category being a genus of its kind, they were held altogether to express whatever could be the subject or *predicate* of any proposition; and their numbers fixed to ten, under the following denominations: Substance, Quantity, Relatives, Quality, Action, Passion, Time, Place, Position, and Habit, or *having*; Aristot. in Categ. cap. 5. et sequent. Various terms there are not reducible to any certain Category; such as those denoting *oppositions* in several kinds, or extremes in the same species. Under which of the ten genera is the distinction of the terms Black and White to be comprehended? or which of them includes *privation*, as well as habit; as when we say of light, and darkness, that they are alternately successive, or co-existent in the same subject? Aristotle certainly found the Categories transmitted; and, most probably, made no alteration in them; unless he introduced the distinction of *substance* into *primary* and *secondary*, as analogous to his physical theory, which will be explained. With all defects imputable to them, they may still stand in competition, for propriety and universality, with any set of philosophical *predicamenta* that have since been produced.

† With regard to the restriction of the *predicables* to four or five, it is to be understood as connected with the distribution of all propositions into five classes; in each of which the relation of the *predicate* to the subject was variable, according as the former might be either the *genus* of the latter, or a species of it, or its specific difference, or something proper to it, or only accidental. A predicate, therefore, could have annunciation only in one or other of these modes of relation.

only, as substituted by the Stagirite in place of logical terms, the syllogistical demonstration should be admitted to proceed, as the guide to scientific knowledge, it is of importance to understand to what lengths it can go, and what appears to be the amount of its discoveries of general truth. Let the conclusions of the three figures of the Categorical syllogism be collected, to decide this point; and it will be manifest, that their whole result is no more than the establishment of one general principle, that "whatever is affirmed or denied of any idea, as a *genus*, may be affirmed or denied of all the species, and the individuals appertaining to it." The fourteen modes of the three figures make no stretch beyond this narrow rule of reasoning; and, with respect to the *modal* syllogisms, which state an affirmative, or negative, in a proposition, as necessary, or contingent, possible, or impossible, they may be reckoned the *fluxions* of the syllogistic art; which, after Aristotle's discovery of them, and his amazing pains to render them intelligible, remain still in obscurity, hardly reducible into consistency or form, and, being ambiguous in themselves, afford no conception of what is demonstrable by them, or to what account they could be turned in science.

Could Aristotle be under a delusion as to the extensive operation of his syllogistic proofs in science? It is not to be imagined; unless we insist on the apothegm, that the greatest genius may, in some one point or other, discover prepossession, or a propensity to error. But we may, without any imputation of prejudice, or imbecillity, account for the prodigious labour he bestowed in perfecting the argumentative art. It was regarded, notwithstanding the abuses it had undergone, as the concomitant, and even the test of all just progress in science. It presented a field for the display of singular acuteness, and accuracy of conception, in a subject of the most abstract kind; with which, although many pretended to be conversant, yet few or none had studied it theoretically by itself, unless in a superficial manner, or as it might be made a vehicle to loose reasoning and sophistry. To give it the form and face of a system, that might be completed to a degree beyond what any before him had conceived, was an object of ambition to the enterprising mind of Aristotle. This would be motive enough for commencing his theory; and, it might be almost finished before he considered the *ultimatum* of its efficacy.

ficacy. His four books of Analytics, divided into *prior* and *posterior*, testify what a distinct and comprehensive view he took of his dry, and apparently barren subject, so as to bring forth out of it a theory of the categorical syllogism, having one subject, and one predicate, susceptible of three forms, or figures, distinguished from each other, by different positions of the *middle term*, as subject, or predicate, in the premisses, and which were resolvable into three, as the whole that could take place; although a fourth position might have been devised, and which was not hit upon, until the famous Galen made the discovery. His syllogism, however, might be reckoned no more than a different arrangement of the first figure. It belongs to those who treat, professedly, the subject of Logics, to show with what precision the legitimate moods of the three figures of the syllogism, which have respect to its proposition being either an universal affirmative or an universal negative, or a particular affirmative, or a particular negative, are distinguished from the illegitimate and false kinds. They may mark the exactness of his rules for the conversion of one proposition into another, and observe the special, and almost unquestionable, claim he has to the invention of *topics*, or general heads of every kind of question or argument, together with the methods * of treating them pertinently, and to most advantage. It is presumable that the schools of philosophy had furnished nothing of this kind, but what was merely futile, or came from the mints of the sophists †. Hence we find the high value Cicero put upon this treatise, as a rarity in scientific doctrine, and which he had so carefully studied, as to be able, when upon a journey, and at sea, to compose, from memory, an extract of its general principles; and, chiefly, upon these, applied to juridical questions, to produce that noted dissertation of his, which bears the same title with the original. Without farther tracing particulars, it must be acknowledged, that no constituent, or adjutory part of the syllogistic argumentation, or of the dialectic and rhetorical, was omitted by Aristotle, and that we can quote few performances marked with more philosophic attention and ingenuity.

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* Diogen. Laert. 4to edit. pag. 283.

† In Topicis, ad Trebatium.

If, still, it be urged that the ingenuity in devising the prolix rules of the art, supererrogated upon the art itself, considering its limited powers, it ought to be remembered, that every eminent school of philosophy had its favourite study, which was either a particular branch of the sciences, or preparatory to advancement in them. The Pythagoreans contemplated numbers. Plato joined to these the theories of geometry, and of mathematical lines, and figures. Aristotle chose the dialectic, and made it what it was not before, a regular study, and, at the same time, an exercise for the minds of his disciples, who might, even when *tyros*, learn from it the elements of ratiocination, and gradually acquire the faculty to argue, distinguish, divide, and define, in a superior manner. To excel in this art was, for some time, the pride and characteristic of the Peripatetic school; but it appears from Cicero's * account, that many of its élèves declined the practice of the more nice and formal dialectic, and contented themselves with the easier part of it, suited to rhetoric.

There are some general theories with respect to the rational faculty, to just reasoning, and the demonstrative proof, delivered by Aristotle, which merit particular attention, although several of them cannot be reckoned peculiar to him, or before unrecognised in the schools †. All human knowledge, attainable by disquisition, and that may be termed *discursive*, must proceed upon a general notion of what is the subject of discourse, and be, ultimately, resolved into some principle, self-evident to the mind, and of which it will require no other proof but what is found in its own immediate conception of truth. About things unknown there can be no process of reasoning. But, in these cognoscible by us, there is perception, *intelligence*, and demonstration. The former two are the source and foundation of the latter; for *nothing is found in the mind which was not antecedently in some of the external senses*; yet, as the perception of what is true or false ‡ rests not with them, farther than their testimony goes with respect to sensible objects, the judgment of all speculative truth is found in the mind itself; which, therefore, possesses *intelligence*,

* De Finib. Bon. et Mal. lib. 4. pag. 85. Ibid. lib. 3. pag. 78.

† Analytic. Poster. lib. 1. cap. 1.

‡ Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

intelligence, or a species of knowledge distinct from that called *science*, or demonstration. By means of this faculty, certain principles are perceived to be true, *intuitively*, and without demonstration *. Such is the axiom, *It is impossible that the same thing should be, and not be, in, and according to, one, and the same respect*. It is not to be demonstrated; or, if we apply demonstrative proof to it, the probation must run into an endless series; for no principle can be advanced that hath in itself more perspicuity. Analogous to this first *negative* principle, is that which is the first *affirmative* one: *It is necessary that every thing be predicated affirmatively, or negatively, of another*. Between contradictory propositions there can be no medium: Yet no absolutely certain affirmation can be made about things future, contingent, and mutable. All science and demonstration are, therefore, conversant about truths necessary, unchangeable, and also universal: Nor can they have singular things, or individuals, for their object, unless, by *induction*, these can be collected into a genus. And for this, there is no reason to have recourse to Plato's ideas †, separate from singulars. It is sufficient, that, in them, certain common natures, or states of being, are to be noted, which, in any instant, can be predicated of them; and so a kind of demonstration may be formed ‡. Thus, science is, in one respect, of *universals*, and, in another, not; or, both, of generals and particulars.

There is nothing more to the credit of Aristotle's judgment, in his four books of *Analytics*, than his pronouncing first principles of reason, or axioms, not to be demonstrable. Yet he seems to forget this maxim, when he institutes a proof of the certainty of his syllogistical demonstration. To demonstrate axioms, is much the same as attempting to define the common names, that stand, in any language, for simple ideas; the effect of which is, that, in the definition, several terms, or more than one, are employed to express an idea which has no composition. As definitions, in this case, create confusion, so axioms, demonstrated, tend not to strengthen, but to perplex, the evidence of common reason. What science has not its definitions, and axioms, and some of these, although

* *Metaphys. lib. 1. cap. 3.—4.*
cap. 8. et 11. pag. 109.

Analyt. ibid.

† *Analyt. Post. lib. 1.*

‡ *Metaphys. lib. 14. cap. 10. pag. 758.*

although just, and indubitably true, liable to the exception of a wrangler or a sceptic? A straight line, says a mathematician, is the shortest one that can be drawn between two given points. It may be said, that this is neither a definition nor a description of a straight line; but the assignment of a special property, which, when considered, distinguishes it, indeed, from every curve; yet, to one who never adverted to this property, it is a problem held forth in place of a definition. Sextus Empiricus, and with him, perhaps, Mr Locke might insist, that the ideas of a straight line, and of a curve, could only be got from eye-sight of the one, and the other, and that the alledged property of the first, not being immediately perceptible, could make no part of its simple idea, and, if even it were conjoined with it, by reflection, and comparison, the proof of its reality could not be an abstract one, but must rest entirely in the representation of the sight or the feeling. It need not be added what objection the sceptic might make to the evidence of the senses; which, if not to be relied upon, the mathematician could never ascertain what is to be understood by a straight line. But still the difference between it, and a crooked one, may be obvious to the perception of a child; who, without acquaintance with their names, or the least conception of their properties, will be observed to distinguish them in things set before him; and, perhaps, to prefer what is straight as the most agreeable in figure. This, and other signs of intelligence natural to man, are early given, before the dawn of the reasoning faculty is discoverable, or any inference drawn, either from action or passion. When the power of reason operates, and especially when it is much occupied with the contemplations of abstract science, the influence of natural intelligence is weakened. The sense of its importance is, in a manner lost; until, in the refinements and perplexities of over-strained reason itself, it becomes manifest, that, without an appeal to it, extravagant conclusions will be formed, or the sciences labour in vain for demonstrative proofs of many of their principles.

Notwithstanding there be a natural perception of the truth of axioms, or first principles, they cannot be said to be *innate*, or to be born with us; for they may, if no occasion of recognising them be presented, remain dormant, or unknown to men, through the whole course of their lives.

lives. Aristotle, it appears from this observation, did not suppose, in the sense of some of the schoolmen, whom Mr Locke has taken much unnecessary pains to confute, that axioms, or self-evident truths, were imprinted in the human mind, like sentences in a common-place book; and, therefore, must be discoverable to, and have the assent of all mankind. Such maxims as, *Whatever is, is*; and, *that a thing cannot be, and not be, at the same time*, are, in fact, well understood by men of the most ordinary and meanest understanding, who testify, numberless ways, their conceptions of them as true, and yet have never reflected upon them in a speculative manner; and, perhaps, if they were stated to them in the form of general propositions, they would at first create some embarrassment, instead of an immediate perception of their truth. No philosopher, however, could communicate to any one a more perfect intelligence of their certainty, than what would be before apprehended, naturally, by the untutored mind. Demonstration arises from first, immediate, and known causes of the conclusion, or, in other words *, from such as are found in the nature of the things themselves that are the subject of it, or from properties conceived to be essential to, and ever inherent in that subject. This is the true, and most perfect kind of demonstration; and the examples of it are proper to the sciences of geometry and arithmetic. In them, every idea is known for what it is in itself, and as distinct from every other conception. The combining, or disjoining of ideas, so ascertained, and of which the mind itself fixes the standard, can be liable to no dubiety. Another species of demonstration is certain and true, but less perfect; as when, from an effect, an adequate cause is inferred. Our bodily senses are moved, and several perceptions excited in them; there are, therefore, things external which make these impressions. "We hear musical sounds; music, therefore, is played." "The stars which do not twinkle are nearest the earth; but the planets have no twinkling; therefore, they are nearest the earth." In scientific proof, that which is affirmative is to be preferred to the negative, and that which concludes universally, to what hath only a particular conclusion, and the direct demonstration to the indirect. Of all the syllo-

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* Analyt. Post. ibid. cap. 13.

gistical figures, the first affords the most complete demonstration, as its conclusions are both affirmative and universal. There can be no demonstrative reasoning, when the conclusion and the premisses are reciprocated, and used, alternately, to prove each other. It is the same absurdity as a progression to infinity, or turning argumentation round in a circle. As an evasion of all reasoning, it is marked, in Logic, by that name.

These general theories, relative to the kinds of just demonstration, and argument, are followed up with an enumeration of all the false species, called *sophisms* *. The conclusion of a syllogism, not faulty in its form, cannot be denied; but there may be fallacies used in the terms, or denominations of things, and assumptions made upon mistaken or perverted conceptions of the meaning of the premisses. Such sophistical deceptions being either verbal, and in the diction, or such as affected the notions, or statement of the things themselves, were reduced by Aristotle to thirteen heads; reckoning six of the former, and seven of the latter. Of these last, that of the *ignoratio Elenchi*, or the *mistake of the question*, is allowed to be not only the most general sophism, but so comprehensive that all the rest may be resolved into it. To such insignificance do many of his logical distinctions turn. He himself proves, in one remarkable instance at least, that his rules of reasoning might be better framed than remembered. To establish his doctrine, that the earth's centre is also that of the universe, he uses the following argument †: "All heavy bodies tend to the centre of the universe; but we have the experience that heavy bodies tend to the centre of the earth: Therefore, the earth's centre is the same with that of the universe." This is a fallacious syllogism, including what is called a *petitio principii*, or a *begging of the question*, which assumes that as a principle in the premisses which is to be proved; and, frequently, amongst the inattentive, passes for sound argument.

Upon the whole of the logical part of Aristotle's philosophy, it may be observed, that his strenuous endeavour to render it what it could not be made, either a system altogether complete in itself, or an *organon* perfective,

* Sophist. Elench. cap. 1.

† De Coelo, lib. 3. cap. 13.—14.

perfective, in a high degree, of science, is a convincing proof of the incompetency of both these aims, and especially of the latter; for it may well be said, that what he could not accomplish, in respect of inventing and adjusting the materials of the art, or of exhibiting its efficacy in science, no other individual can reckon upon performing; nor have the labours of logicians, in successive ages, made any considerable addition to what was done by him in either of these ways. With regard to the study of the art, it ought not to be laid aside, or contemned; although it need not be prosecuted beyond its elementary, and most useful parts. Comparing it, as an exercise of the rational faculty, with the mathematical studies, it hath its peculiar advantages. However indubitable the proofs of the former be, they contemplate only the relation of equality, capable, indeed, of illustration from all the diversities of figures and numbers; but they bring no other ideas into view. To a mere mathematician, the Categories are a tract of knowledge unsurveyed, but in one general head; and that much, or altogether, of the abstract kind. It will be an uncommon case, if the acquired steadiness of his mind, in the investigation of the relations and properties of lines and figures, be such as to compensate for his inattention to substances and qualities, or to the discovery of physical and moral truths. To the proper apprehension of these, the *Dialectic*, founded on the study of the Categories, must be acknowledged the proper guide. But if, from a vain conceit of the logical art, as something equivalent to science itself, superior excellence in it be made an object, and all its powers of protracting disputation be studied, it then becomes the nuisance of science, and the regard paid to it will be worse than a total neglect. It was this mistaken admiration, or absurd abuse of it, which, pervading the schools in the dark ages, rendered them the *antipodes* to all knowledge, but that of the *syllogism*, and the management of it; and it may be accounted the greatest impeachment of Aristotle's labours in Logic, if not a just condemnation of them, that they were so calculated by him, as to be subservient to, and promote endless disputation. He points out the methods by which the defender of a thesis may be invincible, and the opponent show no less insuperable skill in his attacks. How, then, did his Logic differ from that of the Sophists, which tended to throw every

question into indefinite controversy? In nothing else than in the mode of contending. The disputants might be observed to guard themselves, or to assail, with peculiar formality and address; but to no more purpose of decision, in any point, than if they had only agreed to make faces at each other, and then, like champions, indeed, of equal prowess, to withdraw unconquered from the lists. Could there be a greater burlesque of the art of reasoning? But we proceed to what has been called the *metaphysical* branch, or the *ontology* of Aristotle's philosophy.

The term *Physics*, and the part of philosophy called by that name, it appears, was understood by Aristotle, and in the Peripatetic school, in a very extensive sense. It comprehended the science of beings incorporeal, as well as corporeal, and also that of being or substance in general, with its attributes and properties abstractly considered. This last subject had not the denomination, which it long after obtained, of *Metaphysics*; neither is there any branch of science to which that name is applied in the works of Aristotle. The dialectic reasoning, to which logics corresponded, implied all that we now understand by metaphysics; the origin of which term may be ascribed, according to what is narrated by Strabo * and Plutarch, to a particular circumstance in the first publication of Aristotle's books, by Andronicus Rhodius. It has, however, been inferred, from the Stagirite's calling the subject treated in his *Metaphysics* † the *first Philosophy*, and *Theology*, that a division was made by him of *Physics* into universal and particular; the one respecting every possible affirmation about being in general, and the other, what was to be known, or true of it, as having a specific nature, and distinct properties, or accidents. This opinion was adopted by Alexander Aphrodisaeus, Philoponus, and other commentators of Aristotle, who considered the treatise placed after the *Physics* to be rightly denominated *Metaphysics*,

* Strab. fol. edit. pag. 600. Plut. in Vita Syllae.

It is said, that Andronicus had thought fit to prefix to the twelve or fourteen books which had no title, the epithets *τα μετα τα φυσικα*, the things posterior to the *Physics*, to signify, either that he found these books placed subsequently to the *Physics*, in the general collection of Aristotle's works, or to intimate, that this was judged by him to be their proper place.

† *Metaphys.* lib. 4. cap. 5.; et lib. 3. cap. 3. pag. 667.

fics, on account of its subject being more abstruse, and having a transcendency above that of the physical study. Hence this presumption being embraced by other interpreters, and the schoolmen, metaphysics were distinguished by them, upon the Stagirite's authority, into a separate science, and divided into Ontology, Pneumatics, and Natural Theology; which could justly be regarded as no more than their arbitrary construction. With regard to the books in question *, Plutarch's judgment is very different, who pronounced them defective in material instruction, uncompleted by their author, and what appeared to be only sketches of subjects to be taken up by the learned. They are manifestly destitute of arrangement, and, with reason, suspected not only of being frequently interpolated, but of some entire fabrications.

The inspection of the *Ontological* part of this irregular, and unfinished work, is almost sufficient to create a distaste of the whole. The science of *Ens*, in general, is treated in such a manner as to expose the futility of the subject itself, that appears to afford only a crop of verbal distinctions, and etymologies, or a substitution of words in place of ideas. Here Aristotle's disquisitive genius seems to be wholly misapplied; when, previous to the supposed existence of any species of being, body, or spirit, God, or matter, angel, or man, he proceeded to define what was meant by substance, generally considered; and then, what by the terms *act*, *power*, *property*, and *accidence*, which imply relative ideas, or attributes, and can never be properly defined or described in the most subtle philosophy, but in reference to certain substances, or beings really existing in nature, and to which they may be competent. With how little propriety, or success, the Stagirite tried the definitions of these abstruse ideas, is well known, and that the most of them given by him, being not much better than his *notorious* one of motion †, served chiefly to introduce and give currency to the jargon of the schoolmen. We may, therefore, well dispense with any sketch of this fruitless labour,

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* In Vita Alexandri.

† *Motus est actus entis in potentia, quatenus est in potentia*; which is Aristotle's definition of motion, often quoted for its egregious absurdity, has nearly its parallel in other examples. *Actus est, cum res, quae erat in potentia, est aliter quam cum erat in potentia*, stands for the definition of *act*.

from which no other advantage could be reaped, than, perhaps, the *noting* of a word or two, that, in the defect of common language in metaphysical subjects, may be adopted; while it would be a piece of instruction much more requisite to peruse Mr Locke's chapters on the imperfection and abuse of words, and consider how many of the definitions found in Aristotle's *Ontology*, and in the *Metaphysics* of the schools framed upon them, are illusive combinations of obscure or unmeaning words, which ought never to be admitted in philosophy. We shall therefore transfer such tracts of *Theology* as are met with in the metaphysical books, and deserve notice, to that part of philosophy, which, under the name of *Physics*, included the investigation both of corporeal and incorporeal substances; and introduce the extensive subject in the following section.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Of Corporeal Principles.—Of Nature as a Cause.—Of the First Mover.—Argument for the Eternity of Motion, by a Mover and a Moveable.—Of Incorporeal Substance.—Energies of Soul.—Faculties of the Human.—Its Perceptions, and General Ideas.—Whether Percipient of Substantial, or Intelligible Forms, in External Nature.

IN the great inquiry respecting the eternal, or temporal existence of all beings and substances, immaterial and material, together with their energy or action upon one another, and their distinguishable natures and qualities, Aristotle dissented either wholly, or in part, from all the philosophers who preceded him, by pronouncing the visible world, as well as the invisible, to be ungenerated and eternal, both in matter and in form *. He acknowledges, that, by this observation, he contradicted ancient tradition, and the general opinion of other speculative physiologists †, without excepting, or mentioning, *Ocellus Lucanus*, whose advancement of the same position could not be unknown to him, and some of whose arguments he may be reckoned to have borrowed. Matter, indeed, in some imaginary conception of it, was supposed, both by the poets and philosophers of antiquity, to have ever existed; some of them accounting it the only substance, and others the necessary subject to be wrought upon, and, either by fortuitous or determined causes, in some

* Aristot. de Coelo, lib. 1. cap. 10. pag. 340. Ibid. lib. 2. cap. 1. pag. 353.

† It has been alledged by some Critics, that *Ocellus Lucanus's* book *De Natura Universi*, was a spurious production, and the work of a disciple of the Peripatetic School.

some space of time reduced into form. Hence, beside the ruder notion of it as a chaos, or a confused mass of all things together, it was considered as consisting of separate particles, or atoms, either void of all qualities, or, if possessed of some, destitute of all order and arrangement. Thus, variously conceived as the element of natural bodies, it was, in Plato's school, resolved almost into a non-entity, having no other quality but that of the capacity of forms. It may be reckoned, therefore, not altogether an invention, but rather a refinement upon this conception, when Aristotle took into his hypothesis about the world's substance a fifth element, called *first matter*, as the subject or substratum of *second matter*, engendered in it by the accession of form, extended to length, breadth, and thickness. If the question was put, What was the nature of the *materia prima*? his only reply was *, that it had none of the properties of *Ens*, neither were any of the predicaments applicable to it, until it was united with form.

The matter of which the celestial spheres consist cannot be such as any of the elementary kinds, known here below, which render all sublunary things liable to mutation and change †. As the motion of the highest sphere of the heavens, or that of the fixed stars, is proved to be perpetual and invariable, so their material forms are observed to undergo no augmentation or decrease. The records and traditions of successive ages agree, that their circular courses, their distances from one another, and their aspects, have been always the same. The appearances of *falling stars* ‡, and other meteors, amongst which even *comets* may be reckoned, arise not to the celestial heights, but are produced below the orbs of the moon, and the planets, in the region of generation and corruption. Hence it is, that almost all nations, Barbarians, as well as Greeks, entertaining a common belief of the existence of the Gods, have generally placed them in the summit of the heavens; and the word *aether*, in the Grecian language, has an etymology expressive of perpetual

* In his *Ontological* diction, it was non-ens *actually*, and ens *potentially*. It was neither *quid* nor *quale*, nor quantum, nor quidquam eorum quibus determinatur ens; *Metaph.* lib. 6. cap. 3. pag. 693.

† *De Coelo*, lib. 1. cap. 2.—3. pag. 239.; et lib. 2. cap. 6. pag. 358.

‡ *De Meteorologia*, lib. 1. cap. 3. 4. 7. pag. 412.

tual motion, as proper to the heavenly bodies. Thus, what has an essence ungenerated, and incorruptible, is justly assigned to the residence of beings immortal and divine; and the highest spheres may well be pronounced to be of a material element congenial to them, and that partakes not either of generation or corruption.

Such primary matter, common to all visible things, and becoming the subject of the natural or sublunary elements, there must be; otherwise the changes * and alterations that take place in them can be reckoned nothing less than their production out of nothing, which is impossible. To affirm that the world is constituted of matter, *actually*, as it is, amounts to the same thing as to say, that it has no principle of its constitution, and is, unphilosophically, to be considered as *made up of itself*. Such, indeed, was the absurd doctrine of the philosophers preceding Anaxagoras in the Ionic school †, who severally held forth some particular element of nature, as operating upon itself, and at once the subject and the efficient cause of motion and action, and of all the different and contrary phenomena in the natural world. Yet men do not alledge, or conceive, that the brass changes itself into the statue, or the wood into the bed. The wax itself assumes not the figure upon it, but is indebted for it to the seal. The conception, therefore, of a matter original, and that ever was, and which can be only denominated by its *potentiality*, or its aptitude to receive form, must be admitted in any rational theory of the constitution of things. To this principle, *form* must be added as another essential one; since, without it, matter ‡, void of extension and figure, is imperceptible, and cannot be known for any thing more than an ideal or mathematical body. But form, which has indeed no separate existence, renders it a *physical* substance. Nature is constituted of them both, but chiefly of form; because *it is in act*, and avails to exhibit, and to characterise, natural bodies; and, as their diversities cannot proceed from the unchangeable *matter*, there must be *substantial* forms §, which correspond at least to their primary or elementary kinds.

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Hence

* De Generatione et Corrupt. lib. 2. cap. 10. et 11. † Metaphys.
lib. 1. cap. 3. pag. 645. ‡ De Generat. et Corrupt. lib. 2. cap. 9.
pag. 406. § Metaphys. lib. 6. cap. 7. pag. 697.

Hence generation and corruption take place in the forms of all terrestrial substances, while that which is the subject of them remains the same *. To these two principles a third is to be subjoined, that of *privation*; which, although a negative only, and an accident to matter, yet, being as the opposite to form, it marks an essential difference with regard to it. More in number than these, the principles of natural things cannot, in any rational theory, be reckoned. If, as almost all philosophers have asserted, they cannot be supposed to come of, or be the same with, one another, but are to be held *contraries*, they must be more than one; and, being opposites, if only two, they may be concluded to destroy each other. Unless, therefore, an indefinite number be assigned to them, which is no proper object of knowledge or science, it appears most consistent with reason to reduce them to three, *matter*, *form*, and *privation*.

Next to the principles of natural things, if the causes of them be considered, they may be accounted four in kind †; the *material*, or that out of which a thing is made; the *formal*, that by which it is made, or the reason of its essence; the *efficient*, whence comes the first principle of its mutation, or rest; and the *final*, or the end for which it is made. Fortune and chance may also be reckoned causes of various effects; and they may be distinguished from each other, by considering the first as an accidental cause intervening in things done, by the choice of a rational agent, for an end, and the other as respecting accidents to nature itself, or such as are beyond the ordinary purpose of nature. The *intoxication* ‡ of these philosophers is remarkable, who, overlooking the orderly and regular formation of natural things, assigned no other efficient principle, nor acknowledged any wisdom in them, superior to what could be found in their *material* element; and Anaxagoras, surely, discovered

* In *Physicis*, lib. 1. cap. 9. et cap. 6.—7. When Aristotle was studied in the schools, the distinction of his three natural principles, concisely expressed by *Julius Scaliger*, in the following terms, was admired. *Rerum naturalium principia sunt, materia et forma. Haec principia sunt, ut sint. Privatio est principium, ut fiant. Non enim facit esse, sed ut esse possint.*

† *Metaphys.* lib. 4. cap. 3. pag. 676. *Ibid.* lib. 6. cap. 7. pag. 697.

‡ *Ibid.* lib. 1. cap. 3.; et *de Partibus Animalium*, lib. 1. cap. 1. pag. 738.

covered the excellence of his understanding, by asserting the existence of a *vous*, or mind, as the only adequate cause of such wise dispositions. No more rational induction of causes is to be found in the *atomical* systems of Leucippus and Democritus, who insist upon a fortuitous mechanism of bodies. They appear to acquit themselves no better in accounting for the operations of nature, than one would do, who, being called to explain how a piece of nice workmanship was done, or a particular building framed, should say, "It is easily to be understood; for here is the effect of the ax, here went the saw; again, behold the chissel and the adz, each performing its part: They have only moved in certain curious directions; and, therefore, have traced out the dimensions, the figures, and combining lines of the whole." To prove their hypothesis, they certainly should go farther; and, beside telling us how the instruments were fitted to their work, signify by what power they were so impelled as to accomplish special purposes, and to co-operate to one general design. In this sort of philosophy, it is also to be observed *, that, as it makes no references to intention, so it excludes the ideas of *fit* and *good*; which, on the slightest survey of the works of nature, readily present themselves to the human mind.

But, as there is in the universe pure intellect, separate from matter, so there appears to be an embodied species of wisdom, inferior not only to that of higher intelligences, but to the human understanding †. This is *Nature*, so called by men, which acting *spontaneously*, but without conscious skill, is the arranger of substantial forms, the efficient cause of the motion and rest of bodies, and whose energy is most conspicuous in the vegetable and animal systems. It may be conceived, by supposing human art to exist, and to operate unknowingly in certain given materials, or by considering the hand of the carpenter to be impelled to work according to certain lines and proportions chalked out to him, but which he understands not. The signal examples of it are seen in the instincts of animals, unpossessed of the reasoning faculty. The cell of the bee, and the web of the spider, are surely framed upon no formed plan, and

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with

* In *Physicis*, lib. 2. cap. 8. pag. 269.
cap. 1. pag. 737.

† *De Partibus Animal.* lib. 1.

with as little design, as can be ascribed to the bird which rears its nest for future incubation, and the care of its eventual progeny *. But the want of deliberation and foresight does not mar or interrupt the progress of nature towards its ends ; which are attained with a facility and exactness far surpassing human skill and ability in any of its productions. But, under what class of active principles found in the world is this energy of nature, joined with a species of wisdom, to be ranked ? In answering this question, the † philosopher hesitates. Viewed in the animal kind, he thinks it to be *soul*, or *part of soul*, or *not destitute of it* ; adding, that the instinctive sagacity of brutes seemed to be a faculty above the sensitive one, and partaking, in some degree, of the reflecting and rational soul. The difficulty of apprehending his meaning upon this point, gave occasion to a question amongst some of his commentators, whether he might not be understood, from his manner of expressing himself, to admit the doctrine of a soul of the world, or a species of it, which, as represented by Plato, was of a mixed nature. But, beside his rejecting ‡ the notion of a soul ever moving the heavens *violently*, or against their natural tendency, he says more expressly §, “ there is not, as some hold, a soul diffused through all things ; for there are many things inanimate ; and it is absurd to suppose that soul, consisting of one nature, is divided into parts, and assimilated to air and fire, and the other natural and opposite elements.” It was, therefore, the more general opinion of his followers, that this efficient nature was to be restricted to a corporeal energy, comprehensive of matter, form, and accidents. Simplicius, indeed, contends for its being a principle consonant to that of Plato ; and his opinion has been embraced by others of the Peripatetic school, who probably approved it, as a less obscure and more tractable doctrine than the common one, and from which solutions of difficulties in the complex constitution of the natural world, could be more easily derived.

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* De Partibus Animal. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 437.

† Ibid.

‡ De Coelo, lib. 2. cap. 3. p. 354.

§ De Animalibus, lib. 1. cap. 3. p. 485.

Substances sempiternal must exist in the universe, or else all things, being temporary and corruptible, must terminate * in destruction †. But, in the circular motions of the first heavens, there is an act, which hath no beginning, and of which we can no more conceive the commencement or the end, than we can do of time, which is the measure of motion. Eternal time is, as it cannot be comprehended without the *το νυν*, or the instant, dividing the past and the future ‡. Upon the supposition it had a beginning, the instant would be only commencing, and not ending; and, if it had an end, the *το νυν* would be terminating only, and not beginning; which conceptions are alike contrary to the idea of a moment. Motion and time being thus eternal, there must be some substances eternal and perpetual, and these not such only as the supreme heaven itself, in which the motion exists, but which, being incorporeal and intellectual, are substances in act. To have potentiality of motion belongs to matter, and corporeal things; all which, as the physical poets say, might have slept forever in *chaos*, without any distinct or formal substance being produced. But, to have motion in act, is the property of substances having the intellectual nature; and, although whatever acts must have power, yet here it is necessary to conceive act as prior to power; for power may be supposed to be unexerted; and then it might be concluded, that motion, and all things consequent to it, might never have existed. By thus subtilizing, in his ideas and argument, the philosopher would infer a sort of physical necessity for the eternal action of the intellectual mover upon the material moveable, and so support his favourite hypothesis of the world's eternity. He was too intelligent in the rules of just reasoning to hold forth an eternal § series of motion, or a concatenation of causes and effects, without any one cause

* Metaph. lib. 12. cap. 6. p. 741.

† De Coelo, lib. 2. cap. 1. p. 353.

‡ In Physic. lib. 8. cap. 7.

§ If the Indian, who simply said, that the earth was supported by a tortoise, and that by an elephant, had added, that this last was again upheld by the earth, his reasoning would have exemplified the *circle* in logics, and equalled invalidity, the argument for an uncaused chain of causes and effects.

cause being supposed an original more than another; and *, in his theory of motion, he demonstrates the absurdity of this idea, which implied either a progression to infinity, or that there could be a finite number of moveables communicating motion to each other, and yet the first be no mover in itself and the last moved, but imparting impulse to no other. He maintained that the world was for ever moved upon the energy, not of *many* principles, but of one; whom he calls the *first mover*, and the original of motion.

This principle, he proves, must necessarily be, in itself, indivisible, and incorporeal. Upon the supposition of its having magnitude †, it must be either infinite or finite; but a body infinite in quantity is no more to be conceived than one infinitely small. The addition of parts to parts of matter will never constitute a magnitude, which cannot be added to; nor will its division, in any extent, leave nothing to be taken from it. If finite in magnitude, the principle cannot have infinite power of motion, nor be in ability of moving all things in infinite time. The first mover must therefore be a substance indivisible, and without corporeal magnitude; whose motive power, consistent with his own immobility, is one act, that proceeds not by partial and successive energies, but ever equal to itself, and the same in its effect, is the cause and support of eternal motion in the world.

Yet, notwithstanding the Stagirite reasoned in this just manner, with respect to his first principle, he thought, it appears, that he could not adopt any other hypothesis, but the one common among the philosophers, that the mover and the moveable had always been ‡ in existence, and that the *being* whom he calls the first *εἶς*, and the divine and most dignified one, stood in such need of connection with an entity void of properties, and to which he could hardly give a name, that it must be supposed to have ever co-existed, and been found together with him §. To prove this point, beside the argument from time, he used another, from the eternity

* In Phys. lib. 7. cap. 1. p. 315.
Metaph. lib. 12. cap. 7. p. 742.

† Ibid. lib. 8. cap. 10. p. 386.; et
‡ De Coelo, lib. 1. cap. 9.

§ It may be observed, that this famous argument of Aristotle's has the mark of a fallacy, from its being a *convertible* one; so that he might, after the same manner he does, have proved the eternity of motion from the eternity of the world, or that of the mover from the moveable, as the last from the first.

ternity of motion, accounted by his followers a demonstration *. The existence of motion, said he, requires necessarily a mover and a moveable. Either, then, it must have been eternal, or had a beginning. If it was eternal, the mover and moveable must have subsisted together with it. If it began to be in time, the mover, and moveable, before it commenced, either were, or were not, in being. Upon the supposition that they were not, they must have been produced by some motion, antecedent to the first that can be supposed, which is absurd. If they existed, and yet neither did the one move, nor was the other put in motion, there must have been either an aptitude in both, or an inaptitude. If the first, there could then be no reason why the one should not act, and the other be acted upon. If the second, the supposed inaptitude could not be removed, nor their approximation made greater, but by a motion absurdly imagined previous to the primary one. Motion, therefore, being eternal, the first moveable, which is the heavens, must be concluded to be such likewise. So stands this subtle, and specious, but invalid argument. It assumes what ought to be proved, that every idea of motion implies the co-existence of a mover and a moveable, which is requisite only in the case of local motion. His dignified principle of an *immoveable* mover, might surely have existed by itself, and before such motion began. In the world of nature, as now constituted, there is motion in *mind*, of which we are conscious, in the succession of our thoughts, ideas, and volitions, which often has no respect to a moveable. These internal motions arise, when we neither *will* to move any thing, or, *willing* it, find it impossible to be done. It is not, therefore, true, that, to every species of motion, a moveable must concur; since a thing may be self-moved, without communicating motion; and, in like manner, there may be a moveable which remains unmoved. Again, if we consider the connection, or necessary intercourse between the two, supposing them to exist together, it is not to be inferred merely from their several capacities to act, and to be acted upon. Every mover cannot move every thing, but is under the limitation of its own power, and of the capacity of what is to be moved, which may be more or less, and admit of modifications. But, let it be granted, that the power of the one, and the aptitude of the other, was as great as possible, and that the
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* In Phys. lib. 8. cap. 1. p. 319.

first motion, according to Aristotle, must have consisted in the action of a moveable, powerfully and ever acted upon; yet this would prove only one species of it to exist in the universe; and that this species, whatever it was, being the effect of one act, eternal, and continuous, was ever the same, and unchangeable. But experience demonstrates, that various and diversified motion takes place; and the philosopher * could only contend for the uniformity in the circular one of his *quintessential* heavens, since that of the planets was reckoned by him contrary to it; and motion, in the world below, known to be traverse, interrupted, and variable. His argument, therefore, for the world's being eternal, derived from the eternity of motion, is unsupported by reason, and illusive, and what even his fiction of the indestructible matter of the heavens, ever moved in one direction, while its contrariety obtains in other spheres, tends to subvert.

His argument taken from the imagined eternity of time, and applied to the same purpose, is of no more validity. Time, abstracted from all being or existence, is an idea hardly to be conceived. He calls it himself † the *number* or measure of motion; and this last, he says, cannot be without a *physical* body. Both the one and the other must, therefore, be conceived to exist prior to this measurement of them. What proves yet more, that he conceived not only time and motion, but space or place, to be relatives or affections of body, he adds, that, without the boundary of the heavens, none of them can be found. If, then, time presupposes body and motion, it is not eternal, but must have an idea annexed to it, that implies a succession of moments after moments, conceivable by finite beings, and competent to mutable objects, but which is inapplicable to *eternity* that imports an unsuccessive existence of an infinite being, where the *to*, dividing it into the past and future, can have no place.

But, notwithstanding his maintaining these false tenets, he held intellect or deity to be the superior principle in the universe, and prior to all other things, if not in time, yet in efficiency, dignity, and excellence. There is, said he, but one first *essence*, and one immoveable mover, in the world; on whom all other substances depend for being and life; which, in

* Metaph. lib. 12. cap. 7. pag. 742.

† Ibid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

in him, is equally perfect in kind and continuity. Being incorporeal, he must subsist thus immutably, and separate from sensible things *. Other sempiternal substances there are, but he is the immovable one. Such are the intelligences which transcend the highest celestial spheres. They grow not old by time, nor undergo any such mutation as affects whatever is not included within the uniform and perpetual circumvolution of the heavens. They are acted upon, but not directly or physically, but in a way agreeable to their intellectual nature. The first mover, without change of place, or modification † of his substance, causes motion in them, from the perception they have of pulchritude, and their desire of good. He moves them, therefore, as being loved. The planets, together with the sun and moon, partaking of the perpetuity of the circular motion of the heavens, although in a contrary course, contain intelligent and immortal natures, less perfect, but, in like manner, spontaneously moved towards the first cause of good. On account of distance from it, a yet greater contrariety obtains in nature, as found in the sublunary region of the world, and on the earth, which, although of a globular form, is fixed and immovable. In it, as there is a quadruple variation of motion, so there are four kinds of natural bodies, called the terrestrial elements. They are of determined forms, but being bounded in their motions, they are dissoluble, and subject to change. Hence also, they are transmutable into one another. Water is generated from air, and from air, fire; and so conversely. No natural body continues always

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* De Coelo, lib. 1. cap. 9.; pag. 748; Metaph. lib. 12. cap. 741.; De Animalium Motione, cap. 6. p. 543.

† Although this notion of the first mover's action might be borrowed from a similar one of Plato, yet the adoption of it shows Aristotle's attention to the minutest article of his system. The direct impression of motion, and by an act of will, on the part of the deity, might be understood to mark the beginning of motion; any signification of which was to be avoided. The opinion, when considered by itself, as an effort of the human mind, too weak to conceive the action of the deity upon his creatures, in a manner consistent with his immutability, or taken in a special or moral view, may be reckoned not unworthy of philosophy. But, standing as it here does, as part of Aristotle's argument for the eternity of motion, it can pass for no more than a metaphysical refinement, in the manner of that philosopher.

the same, in one separate state, but admits of variations in its form *. By the accession and reversion of the elementary heat from the heavenly bodies, especially that of the sun and moon, in a constant course, a vicissitude of generation and corruption takes place in all terrestrial bodies, which otherwise could not be explained. By this means, the want of that perpetuity, derived to substances celestial from the revolving power of the heavens, is, in an inferior manner, supplied here below. Nature, as is commonly said, affects to do, in all things, what is best; and, as existence is preferable to non-existence, and the modes of being cannot, in every part of the universe, be the same, or alike perfect, she makes the defective approximate, in a certain measure, to the undefective; and, where no ever enduring and incorruptible substance, in the individual, can be formed, she introduces a kind of equality to it, by a generation of beings; which, separately taken, are corruptible and mortal, but whose species is continually renewed, and therefore emulates the perpetuity of the celestial essences.

Nature constituted, as has been said of matter and form, along with privation, is made, by Aristotle, the substitute for divine *procedure*, or any action of the deity in the world, excepting the indirect one, upon the *primum mobile*, or first heavens. Nature, therefore, although no divinity is represented as having the powers of a most wonderful one, which, acting without deliberation, or upon any general plan, effectuates, in all particular things, the wisest and best purposes. She calls forth forms in their proper order, regulates their combinations and disjunctions; and, from her, their *sympathies* and antipathies, and other such occult qualities, are derived. But having stated, so far as it is intelligible, what we are to understand by matter, as Aristotle's first physical principle, it is proper to attend more particularly to the second, and consider whether it may be in itself more perspicuously conceived, and how it serves to explain the phenomena of the natural world. Form is said to be that by which a thing is made. It is then a question to be asked, Is any particular or special form to be considered as the essence of a natural body, which has a separate being, and can be detached from it?

No;

* De Generat. et corrupt. lib. 2. cap. 10. p. 498.

No; it exists only in corporeal substance, and makes it *what it is*, by its particular organization, and other perceptible qualities. What conception, then, is to be formed of the matter previous to its being substantiated? This is unintelligible; for, though the matter always existed, by the supposition, yet it appears not to be any cognoscible thing, but only what might become something. In this point, the Stagerite stumbled upon the old sophistical dispute, whether *being*, at least, in the case of generation, might not come from *non-entity*; and, although he endeavours to get rid of it ironically, it made an awkward blot upon his physical principles. Taken in any rational view, according to his hypothesis, his forms either generated in matter what was not in it before, or, from *potentiality* of something existing in it, they produced its actual being; which is equivalent to a generation of something out of nothing; a tenet inconsistent with his theory, and therefore not to be admitted by him.

In general, with respect to his doctrine of substantial forms, it may be justly pronounced, that hardly any theory can be imagined more unphilosophical and extravagant than to imagine, that, in the numberless variations of the sensible qualities of bodies, there ensues a generation of real entities, distinct from the contexture of the parts of such substances, and, in many cases, either an instantaneous or gradual reduction of them to nothing. The glaring absurdity is aggravated by considering the *legions* of forms, that, under the names of *elementary*, *mineral*, *vegetable*, and *animal*, together with their subdivisions into tribes and classes, which must be admitted to correspond to the almost infinite diversity of natural bodies *. Aristotle, however, content with maintaining his general *thesis*, that matter and forms were the only ungenerated principles of corporeal substances, does not insist so much on the specific arrangement of them, as his commentators, afterwards, chose to do; and, it is remarkable †, that he excludes the whole tribes of *plants* from having any peculiar substantial form, and ascribes to them souls possessed of a vegetative power, and which enable them to live, like some insects, when cut in pieces. Hence it appears, that he could not carry on his theory

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* Metaphys. lib. 12. cap. 3. p. 739.

† De Anima, lib. 1. cap. 5. p. 486.

of *forms*, even when assisted by a *plastic* nature, without incurring difficulties and objections which could not be solved but by other suppositions contradictory to it. As the physical philosophers are arraigned by him for advancing only material principles, limited in their operation, and insufficient to explain the visible phenomena of the world, so it may be said, that he run into the opposite extreme, and, in the main, only perplexed the subject, by holding forth three abstract or metaphysical principles; for such his universal terms, *matter*, *form*, and *privation*, may well be reckoned, which have no more relation to one theory in physics than to another. By his followers amongst the schoolmen, his forms were understood to be more substantial entities than they are represented by him *. They were conceived to be substances in reality, having their creation from the Deity, and an existence distinct from bodies. To these, or to parts of them, when deranged, or deprived of animal life, it was inferred that they would still adhere. The tombs of the dead were reckoned to be replenished with them; and hence philosophy was made to patronise the vulgar belief of spectres and apparitions. Dead carcases, it was declared, might still live, and be resuscitated, in virtue of their adhering subtle forms; and those who required some more palpable proof of the assertion than could be readily obtained, were remitted to observations on the vapours of calcined plants, which, when ascending, might be seen plainly to represent their separated forms.

We now proceed to Aristotle's account of incorporeal substance; which he introduces by pronouncing the subject to be the most important one in Physics †, since *soul* constituted the principal part in all animals. He recites the opinions of the generality of the philosophers before him, who asserted that the soul was the principal cause of motion, and, therefore, self-moved; and, in contradistinction to them, he endeavours to prove that the intelligent soul did not move itself ‡, nor was moved essentially, but by accident, and from its objects; and, in his reasoning, motion, when appropriated to the soul, seems to be considered by

* Vide Morhoffii Polyhistor Literarius, lib. 2. pars. 2. cap. 1.
Anima, lib. 1. cap. 4. pag. 476. Ibid. cap. 2.
pag. 485.

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‡ Ibid. cap. 3. cap. 5.

by him as inferring that which is local, and of the corporeal kind. Harmony, or a composition of contraries, the soul of man is not allowed by him to be; nor yet a rare body consisting of the finer elements; since this would be to leave unaccounted for all its perceptions and knowledge, as well as its affections and passions that are beyond the efficacy of the corporeal elements. He then delivers his noted, but obscure definition of the human soul *, that it is *a substance incorporeal, having the first $\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\chi\iota\alpha$ (perfection or form) of a natural body, organised, and with life* †. He defines it, also, more plainly, to be *that* by which we *first* live, feel, and understand, and to be distinguished by three faculties, the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational, or intelligent; the two inferior being comprehended by the superior one, as a triangle by a square. Neither is it to be conceived, according to the opinion of some philosophers, to be divisible into parts, with one for appetite, another for passion, and a third for reason. Yet its nature was represented by him under two ideas; for, in the intellect itself, he introduces one of his intricate distinctions between a one, the *agent*, and another, the *patient* ‡. As, in every nature, says he, there is a subject, or *material*, that renders it capable of being of this or that species, and also an efficient cause, that *actually* makes it such, so, it may be concluded, that this difference also obtains in the immaterial principle, or rational soul. In one respect, intellect seems to be such, that it has the *potentiality* of becoming all things; and, in another, it possesses the *efficiency*, or habit of this. So light makes colours *actually*, which, before, had only a potentiality of existence. But the intellect *patient* is not *organical*, or blended with body, nor partakes of corruptible passion, any more than the other; yet it is not so separated from body as to exist without it ||. Being a principle whose action is corporeal, it uses the instrumentality of the bodily organs; as the motion of walking implies the intervention of feet, and the sense of sight that of the

* The meaning of the invented term $\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\chi\iota\alpha$ was a perplexity to Aristotle's commentators, and occasioned endless conjectures and disputes amongst the schoolmen. The Patriarch of Aquileia, Hermolaus Barbarus, in despair of finding its signification, had recourse to the invocation of a Daemon, as the only means to discover the mystery.

† De Anima, lib. 3. cap. 9. pag. 507.

‡ Ibid. cap. 4.—5. pag. 503.—504.

|| Ibid. lib. 3. cap. 3. pag. 488.

the eyes ; but it survives them not. The *agent* intellect only is perpetual, and immortal in a separate state ; yet there we can have no remembrance of what is past ; for this supposes a passion of which the intellect, *in act*, is incapable. And thus did Aristotle present to the votaries of his philosophy, in the scholastic ages, a speculation about the human soul, which, if not inconsistent with its immortality, was altogether dark and ambiguous. *Pure* intellect appeared to be considered by him as something foreign to the human nature, that could not be connected with, or act upon body, but by *sympathy*, or in some inexplicable way ; while the intellect *patient*, or, as it was interpreted, the *sensitive* soul, which had its accommodation and existence in the bodily part, was pronounced to be, along with it, destructible and mortal. But, although there was a danger, among a class of men who looked to Aristotle's page for the confirmation of several of their religious and moral tenets, as well as those of science, that many might be thrown into perplexity about the sacred principle of the human soul's immortality, it would yet require a more than ordinary subversion of their understandings, by the Stagirite's metaphysical distinctions, before they could adopt the absurd reveries of the philosopher upon this fundamental point.

With respect to the corporeal senses, and the perception of external objects, Aristotle's doctrine may require a more particular attention, not only on account of the ingenuity of his investigations, but that we may be enabled to form a judgment of some late representations of it, in which his theory, or that of his commentators, about our simple perceptions of objects, our general and abstract ideas, is stated in a peculiar light, and such as, in accuracy and truth, is alledged to be superior to that held forth in the modern philosophy. Sensation, as it obtains in all animals, is, in general, defined by him, an *alteration, or passion of the material organ, caused by something exterior to it* *. This mutation arises not from the organ itself, which is passive, and has only the *potentiality* of motion. It is, therefore, the impression or effect of some sensible object acting upon it externally. What is combustible does not burn itself, but remains unvaried, unless it be kindled into a flame. To pro-
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* De Anima, lib. 2. cap. 5. pag. 491.

per sensation, beside the extraneous mover, a *medium*, through which it acts, is also requisite, and takes place in nature *. The air and light are conveyances of the impressions of distant objects to the senses of hearing, sight, and smell; and to the other two, of touch and taste, the outward texture of the body, or some special organ of it, appears to stand in place of the necessary *medium*. Sounds and odours † are *gradually* produced in the medium of air, and from thence communicated to the organ; but, in vision, there is no such progressive motion ‡. Light is the act of a *diaphanous* body, instantaneously generated in a medium, such as that of air, water, ice, or glass, and gives colours to objects otherwise undistinguishable. Beside the organs of sense, the philosopher proves, that there is, in all the more perfect animals, an *internal sensory*, which serves as a common centre of *intelligence* to the five external senses §. While none of these can perceive any thing more than the particular object that affects it, this superior faculty takes knowledge of them, and forms such a distinct notion of sight as differing from sound, and of one kind of the feelings of touch from another, that they are not confounded together, even when they happen to be combined in one and the same object. Thus, it has the capacity of discerning, at once, different and unrelative things united; as black and sweet, white and bitter, round and soft. But, although it judges these separable things, it must be itself a sense undivided, and no more than one; otherwise, if two, or more, it would be in the condition of the outward organs; one sense would admit one perception apart, and another a second, and another a third; and from these separate sensations no comparison could be made, or judgment formed of the differences between them ||. In general, with regard to the corporeal senses, he observes, that they are perceptive of their objects without the matter; as the wax takes the image of the seal-ring, independent of the gold or the brass of which it may

* De Anima, cap. 7. pag. 492.—3. Ibid. cap. 10.
et Sensibili, cap. 5.—6.

† De Sensu et Sensibili, cap. 5.—6. ‡ This definition of light is as obscure as any of Aristotle's ontological ones; but it is to be considered, that the physical theory of the rays of light, and of luminous bodies, still has its dark sides in philosophy.

§ De Anima, lib. 3. cap. 2. pag. 501. De Sensu et Sensibili, cap. 7. p. 522.

|| Ibid. lib. 2. cap. 12. pag. 498. Ibid. lib. 3. cap. 4. pag. 503.

may be framed ; and that, although the organ of sense be that in which the sensitive faculty *primarily* exists, it is not the same with it, or with the thing perceived. It may indeed form the *ratio*, or mode of the interior sensation ; and, therefore, in the case of a too violent impulse upon the organ, the perception of this *ratio* is either disturbed or destroyed.

In consequence of the perception of external objects, *phantasmata* corresponding to them are excited ; or, in other words, those impressions made on the senses remain in such a manner with them, that, notwithstanding the objects be removed without the reach of the senses *, or when the latter are obstructed, certain images of the former are preserved in the imagination, both in a state of waking and sleeping. If succeeded by others, or obliterated for a time, they can also be recalled, and varied and modified at the pleasure of the soul. Are then these images acquired by sensation, and that become as it were more internal, and detached from sense, by their place in the *phantasia* to be considered as the same, or somewhat different from the received picture, or simple impression of the object ? According to Aristotle, the *imagination*, as well as the act of reason or judgment, is a faculty distinct from that of sensation or perception. The latter, he observes, is, in all animals, and the former only in some. It exists in them from their birth, but the other does not ; and, while the one is always conversant with present objects, the other holds forth and surveys those which are absent. The *phantasia*, therefore, is not sense, but an energy of the soul, that is connected with it ; so connected, that it cannot be where sensation has not, previously, existed †. It is, further, his assertion, that the intellect, itself immaterial, and separated from sense, has the power of forming *ideas*, in a manner altogether abstracted from sensible impressions, or singular images of objects formed in the *phantasia*. Thus, it conceives the idea of magnitude, separate from any particular dimension of body, and of heat and cold, hardness and softness, without regarding individual things affected by these and other qualities. In numberless instances, its particular conceptions are turned into *universals* ; and, in the mathematical sciences,

* De Anima, lib. 3. cap. 4. et cap. 7. pag. 505.

† Ibid.

ces, its contemplations of lines, figures, and numbers, are to be reckoned entirely of the abstract kind.

In this investigation of the human sensations, and of general and abstract ideas, it is to be observed, that Aristotle does not always deliver a positive opinion, but expresses himself in the stile of an inquirer, and with that hesitation and dubiety which the difficulty of his subject might suggest. After asserting that nothing can be learned, or known, by any one destitute of sensible perceptions, and that he who contemplates must necessarily do so from his *phantasmata*, he puts the question *, In what respect may the first conceptions of intellect be reckoned to differ from the *phantasmata*? Is it because the succeeding ones are different, and yet these exist not without images in the *phantasia*? Some of his interpreters, and chiefly Simplicius and Philoponus, have endeavoured to resolve, or to elucidate the point, by making a great distinction between sensible perceptions and ideas of things †; and their comments have been lately adopted by some learned expounders of the Peripatetic philosophy. An idea, say they, is not a mere perception of an external object, or of the sensible qualities of any corporeal substance, collected into one picture, as it may be in the imagination, but some conception of its internal and intelligible form, which renders it distinguishable from every other material composition, and, therefore, to be known under characteristical marks of its particular nature and essence. The perceptible qualities of bodies are ever subject to alteration and change, so that no determined notion of them can be attained. But the immaterial principle, or, as it may be termed, the internal form, or *mind*, gives them the identity, and constancy of nature they have; and to it, therefore, all our knowledge of them must be referred. To the operation of this principle, it is owing, that not philosophers only, but also the vulgar of mankind, are enabled to discern certain fixed and uniform natures, amidst the apparent variety and changeability of the objects that surround them, and which otherwise could not take place. It is added, that this theory, as it stands opposed to that of the *materialists*, ought to be embraced by all

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Theists,

* De Anima, cap. 8. pag. 506.

† Vide Lord Monboddo's Ancient Metaphysics, vol. 1. pag. 51. and Harris's Hermes.

Theists, if they would be consistent in their principle of an eternal mind in the universe.

With what obscurity and perplexity Aristotle's doctrine of substantial forms is attended, has been already observed. But, as it is, in this manner, held forth under particular glosses, and enforced by a most interesting argument, it will deserve a more precise examination. Its revivers appear to prefer the epithet of an *intelligible form* to that of a *substantial* one used by Aristotle, which, indeed, has no more propriety than if he called it a *phantom of substance*. The verbal correction, however, will be hardly found to set the point in a clearer light. In an inquiry into the nature of corporeal substances, or what their essences are, it will surely be admitted that no position can be regarded as any thing more than a hazarded one, and merely hypothetical. When the contexture of their perceptible parts, and their different properties, are, with difficulty, investigated by us, and cannot, by all the elaborate researches in physics, be sufficiently ascertained, what can we pronounce, with assurance, about their internal constitution, or the unseen and hidden principle of their corporeal essence, which has been called by philosophers the *substratum* of their sensible qualities, but that our present conceptions reach not to this *ground-plot* of the Creator's visible works? If we should affirm, with the Peripatetics, that all the qualities of bodies are produced by an essential form, the question will be asked, How does the human mind take knowledge of this form? a question grounded upon the doubt stated by the Stagerite himself. Its idea, say his disciples, may arise in the intellect, from the notice the senses have taken of the perceptible properties of any substance. Does, then, all the knowledge of it consist in this intelligence afforded by the senses? As conceived in the intellect, reply they, it is a knowledge of a peculiar and superior kind. Let, then, the expounders of the Peripatetic doctrine say, to what this intellectual understanding, or mental idea, amounts; they who pretend to be acquainted with the extraordinary powers of intellect, and, after Aristotle, may call the soul the *form of forms*, and advance his paradox *, that *knowledge in act is the same with the thing known, and that which knows*

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* De Anima, lib. 3. cap. 4. pag. 504. Ibid. cap. 7. pag. 505.

is in a sort of identity with the subject of its contemplation. To them it belongs to give the definition of any one substance in nature, according to their conception of its essential or intelligible form. But, upon this requisition, they have been, hitherto, either silent, or evasive in their replies; and Aristotle's obscure definition of the human soul might well prove a discouragement to any similar attempt.

With regard to the assertion, that the physical tenet of substantial forms has a necessary connection with the support of Theism, it can only be said, that, so far as it is evinced to stand in this affinity, it is a laudable one, and those who hold it forth advantageously, in this important view, merit approbation: But, in Aristotle's theory, no relation of this kind can be traced, unless, in order to find it, we take the strained interpretation of his doctrine from his commentators, who consider his *forms* as a species of Plato's ideas existing in corporeal substances, and deriving their origin from the eternal mind. That philosopher, however, did not suppose that his ideas could be embodied in matter, the instability of which admitted not of lasting impressions, but only of faint and fleeting shadows of them, like the reflections of bodies in water. It was also his tenet, that, separate from the intervention of soul, *mind* could not be connected with matter. Aristotle himself admitted, that there were bodies void of animation, as well as animated; and it has been observed, that he assigned no substantial forms to plants, and allowed them only a sort of vegetative soul, which was denied them by his disciple Theophrastus *, who ranked them with things inanimate. But the modern Peripatetic philosophers insist upon an internal principle, under the names of an intelligible *form*, a *soul*, or *mind*, which operates in the unorganised mineral, and stone, as well as in the animal and vegetable productions. They are, therefore, to be asked, What we are to understand by a principle so diversified, and whether they may mean by it one soul of the world, such as Plato held, giving animation and life to the whole system, in consequence of its being endowed with various faculties; or a plurality of incorporeal principles, so different from each other, that one may be called a *motive* soul, another a *vegetative*, an-

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* Porphyry. de Abstinencia, lib. 2.—3.

other an *animal*, another a *rational*; and yet all these insufficient without adding a *formal* soul, corresponding to the particular modifications of the less regular and anomalous masses of matter. Without some clearer explication of the inward principle than has been given, we cannot pronounce the admission of it to be the *test* of Theism, and of validity enough to mark with the designation of Half Theists, or Materialists in Philosophy, all those who may dissent from it; especially when it is considered what illustrious and venerable names might be included in the proscription; those of Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Clark, Baxter, and others, who espoused no such theory, and of whom, it would be a reflection on human reason itself, to alledge that they had not just and sound views of Theism; and that, notwithstanding few of the uninspired of mankind are known to have done its principles equal honour by their writings, they had mistook the proper grounds of its defence, and unwarily, or ignorantly, betrayed its cause.

These remarks may be concluded with observing, that, in philosophical speculation, a Theist will find reason to conclude it to be an indubitable truth, that the *things which are seen were not made of things which do appear* *; or, that matter and motion, even supposing them always to have co-existed, could never have constituted the frame of the visible heavens and the earth; but that, as their existence, so their motions, the arrangements of their parts, and their diversified natures, have proceeded from the *word*, and according to the appointment of God: Yet, as to the physical mode of this divine, and all-wise ordination, he will not, even upon a review of all the theories of philosophy, be presumptuous enough to decide. He may entertain an apprehension that the Peripatetic doctrine, with regard to the essences of things, obscure, and susceptible of various explications as it is, may not militate so far against the Materialists as its adherents conceive it to do. The generation of corporeal forms, in the bosom of matter alone, has been always their topic, and only resort for the account of them; and, unless the contrary doctrine be stated in an explicit and unequivocal manner, free from confusion of corporeal and incorporeal principles, some handles may be given
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* Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. xi. v. 3.

to constructions of it favourable to their argument. This suggestion is not a vague or groundless one, but what was verified in the use made of Aristotle's substantial forms by his disciple Strato Lampfacenus, who resolved them into the sole effects of matter once universally moved, and thence capable of converting itself into all the phenomena of nature.

Aristotle prosecutes his investigation of the faculties of the soul, by explications of its powers of memory and *reminiscence*, its different conditions in sleeping and waking, the phenomena of dreaming, and whether *divinations* from it were probable or improbable. To follow him in the detail of his speculations and arguments, upon these heads, would here prove tedious. Let it then suffice to observe, with respect to the first of them, that, after asserting the connection of memory with the images in the phantasia *, he distinguishes what he calls *reminiscence* from the simple recalling to mind former impressions, or that species of memory which is observable even in brutes. He considers the first as a peculiar act of the rational soul, when, by recollection, and passing from one idea to another, it gets into that train of thought which leads on to the recognisance of that particular object, or of that special truth, that had been formerly known, but was forgotten. Experience proves the reality of this mental operation. According to his theory, sleep is the impotency of the senses, as waking is their active and lively state †. It is not merely a deficiency, but a restriction of their energy, which ensues from a certain affection of the common sensory, then compressed as with a band or chain. He ascribes this obstruction of the senses, not unphilosophically, to the concoction of the aliments, and the evaporation ascending from it to the brain; a process of nature which takes place, less or more, in all animals. He observes, that the propensity to sleep is stronger or weaker, according to the quantity of the evaporation, which is always increased from the more concocted state of the aliments, and the heat that attends it. Hence melancholy persons ‡, little disposed

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* De Reminiscencia, lib. 1. cap. 1. pag. 524.

Vigilio, cap. 1. pag. 529. ; et ibid. cap. 3.

† It is Aristotle's observation, repeated by Plutarch, that great geniuses are most subject to melancholy. Plut. in Vita Lyfandri.

‡ De Somnio, et

to sleep, are found to be of a frigid constitution, and deficient in the interior warmth requisite for the digestion of food, or, being *atrabilius*, to want the humidity consistent with proper evaporation.

Of all the concomitants of sleep, dreams are the most ordinary, and the most unaccountable; and Aristotle owns the motions and images excited in the *sensorium*, when all the avenues to it are shut up, to be a very singular and surprising phenomenon. He reckons, however, that they may be explained from the remainder of the motions impressed on the senses in vigilance *, or some *similitudes* of them, which are absorbed, and retained in the sensory. Thus, says he, in the movements of air or water, one portion of either being propelled, a like motion in another at rest is generated; and a series of it goes on for a time, in such a manner, as if the alteration of the state of each ensued by a sympathetic affection. He considers it as demonstrable, that motions communicated to the senses, when they are awake, must affect them, in a certain way, in their obstructed state. If men walk from bright sunshine into the shade, they see not, for a little time, distinctly, on account of the rays of light having been diffused over the organs of vision, and followed with a temporary adherence to them. Colours, long and steadily looked upon, are felt, as it were, to possess the eye, and exclude the immediate perception of others different from them. He infers, therefore, that the senses, in sleep, may have such retention of the impressions made upon them, as will account for their reproduction in the sensory, when otherwise inaccessible to images; and his conclusion is, that dreams are nothing more than a species of this recurrence, imperfect, and attended with confusion. This solution of dreams can only be regarded as a superficial one, and by no means adequate to their complicated phenomena; which, notwithstanding the treatises, or essays, ancient and modern, upon the subject, still require a more satisfactory explication †. The opinion with respect to divinations by them, the philosopher states problematically, and as a question of curiosity, and what may admit of argument, but not of discussion, upon any certain principles. He con-
tents

* De Insomniis, cap. 2. pag. 534.
cap. 1.—2. pag. 539.

† De Divinat. per Somnia,

tents himself, therefore, with saying, that the common notion of them is not to be altogether contemned, or easily eradicated; and, after some alternate reasoning, he leaves the point in dubiety; which is, by some, ascribed to his reserve in expressing his sentiment, when it might contradict an opinion connected with religion, and generally embraced by the multitude. Having, at so great length, unfolded Aristotle's Physics, we come to the display of his Moral Philosophy.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Ethics not properly denominated a Science.—Three States of Human Life.—Virtue the only true efficient good of the Mind.—Perfect Felicity a speculative idea.—Virtue perfected by acts and habit.—Whether placed in Mediocrity.—Definition of the Felicity competent to Man.—Estimate of Aristotle's Moral Scheme.

ACCORDING to Aristotle's division of Philosophy, *Ethics* was that part of it which respected action, and, therefore, called Practical. The term *ἠθικα*, as used by the Greeks, being derived from the radical word *ἥθος*, custom, he observes *, had a propriety in it, and a special reference to the subject of *morals*; since, whatever seeds of them nature may be supposed to afford, they receive their character, improvement, and perfection, from right institution and usage. In a strict sense, no moral virtue can be reckoned implanted by nature; otherwise it could not be deemed of more merit than gravity is reckoned in the stone, or levity in the flame, and as little capable of improvement. For a like reason, it would be yet more absurd to say, that any act of virtue was contrary to nature, since this would be much the same as to assert, that the stone might mount upwards, or the flame have a descent, against its natural tendency. But nature needs to be strengthened by reason and habit, in order to excite the faculties of man, and improve his condition; and that branch of philosophy which has for its object the moral rule

* De Ethicis ad Nicomachum, lib. 2. cap. 1. pag. 13.; et Magnorum Moraliū, lib. 1. cap. 6. pag. 112.

rule of life, or man's proper actions, must be acknowledged to be different from science, or, at least, to be, only in a limited sense, a speculative one *. It proposes what is to be done for the attainment of an end, rather than what is to be contemplated as true. Its aim is to accomplish in the individual, and for his benefit, what a wise policy effectuates in a city or state, when it is improved and perfected by the participation and observance of just and suitable laws.

Nature, it may be granted, has imparted to men certain propensities to moral functions, which, in some degree, dispose them to acts of justice, temperance, and fortitude. But these can be reckoned to be no more than mere instincts competent to children, and perceptible even in the inferior creatures. The more rational, and elevated state of man, requires a more determined sense, and *form*, of the moral virtues in his soul, and that they should be esteemed and desired by him as his proper good †. They are in themselves estimable, and have a peculiar recommendation, which is not thought due to the faculties of the intellect, such as natural wit, penetration, and memory. These are not termed virtues; nor, exclusive of their proper use, can they be accounted such, in the sense we understand the moral qualities that have been mentioned to come under that denomination. For there is, in the latter, a praise extended to the person who exhibits any of them, as acting from free-will, and choice, a proper part; and an approbation is given, not to the excellence of the virtue alone, but also to his laudable performance of it.

Human virtue, and human good, are relative to man's nature and condition ‡. His soul consists of two parts, the rational and irrational. The one is adapted to contemplate, and to judge, and the other to desire, and have the enjoyment of good. What the eye is to the body, by giving help and efficacy to all its other powers, such reason and reflection eminently prove to the human soul. By the intervention and counsel of the intelligent faculty, all the important motions of the soul may receive a main direction; and, by a preference given to the virtuous propensities,

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* Ethic. ad Nicomach. lib. 1. cap. 1.

† Magnor. Moral. Ibid. cap. 5.

‡ Ethic. ad Nicomach. lib. 1. cap. 13. pag. 12.

penfities, they may be rendered fteady and permanent from cuftom and exercife. It conftitutes gradually that fingular endowment of the mind called *prudence* *; which, befide the judgment formed, and the choice made of certain objects and purfuits, as moft worthy in themfelves, and productive of the greateft good, avails to regulate the energies of the foul with refpect to thefe, and to qualify them in fuch a manner, that they may be found to correpond, moft effectually, to the end propofed. As it cannot be called fcience, fo neither is it, properly, to be termed art; although it bears fome analogy to it. Having a clofe affinity to virtue, it may rather be defined, *a habit of the foul, conjoined with reafon*. Separate from it, indeed, no virtue, truly fo called, can be reckoned to exift in the mind. Hence, by fome moralifts, all the virtues were held to be *prudential* confiderations †. Socrates, who improperly called morality a fcience ‡, gave them the name of *reafo*ns, or *rationalities*. Under this conception, they muft all be fupposed to center in the intellect; and, confequently, the natural appetites, and affections, about the regulation of which they are converfant, muft be fet afide, as unconnected with them. This miftake was corrected by Plato, who confidered the conceptions of the intellect, and the movement of the affections, as together conftituting the foundation of *moral virtue*; yet he, in the profecution of his fubject, went beyond the true philofophy of *morals*, by his manner of explaining good, not in relation to human virtue, or to human affections, but in a general and abftract fenfe, unapplicable to the theory before him, and that, confidered in itfelf, muft be pronounced altogether

* De Moribus ad Eudemum, lib. 5. cap. 5. pag. 183.; et ibid. cap. 13. pag. 188.

† Magnor. Moral. lib. 1. cap. 1. pag. 108.

‡ This is by no means to be taken as a juft account of Socrates's Moral Philofophy; who, if he called *Ethics* a *fcience*, and the virtues *rationalities*, confidered them as conformities in man to the general principle of reafon, predominant in the univerfe, but not, therefore, abftract theories, difjoined from the confideration of the human affections and paffions. On the contrary, it has been fhown, that Socrates's theory of Morals, although connected with the fublimer principles of Theology, was calculated for the practical exercife of virtue, and that he inferred the ties and obligations to it, from the view of man as an individual, as a father of a family, and a member of a public community.

altogether fictitious and imaginary. For, what can we understand by a one general idea of good, extended alike to substance, quantity, quality, and all the rest of the categorical epithets, and which would also imply that there was but one science of good sufficient for understanding the several and distinct species of it? an imagination illusive, and which, if adopted as true, can be turned to no account in the exercise of any useful knowledge or art in human life.

Nature has implanted in all men the appetite or desire of good, so generally and constantly, that none of them can be truly said to deviate from it *. We need not ask, What every creature, which hath the use of reason, seeks as its natural wish, and pursues as its chief aim? It may, without hesitation, be pronounced the good, the well being, and the felicity of life, and which, although called, among the learned, by other names than these, yet they, together with the vulgar, mean but one and the same thing. The opinions, however, with respect to what is conceived to be good, are far from being uniform. All men take not the same pains, nor have they equal capacity to judge of the quality of the object which may present itself, not in one, but in several shapes and appearances. Hence, health, riches, honours, and fame, have each their different votaries. To assign the reason, or motive, why one of them is preferred to another, may be difficult; yet, in general, it is to be observed, that the predilection often arises from men's inclination to chuse that condition which assures a deliverance from the special calamity, or disadvantage, under which they happen to labour. Thus, the poor, for an obvious reason, think wealth the most desirable good; and the sickly, or infirm in body, place it in health and vigour; while those, who, having sensibility, are exposed to scorn or reproach, conclude it to be inseparable from reputation. And, in like manner, the same persons, in dissimilar situations, see it in different forms.

There are three states of human life, to the one or other of which the felicity of man may be supposed to be referable; the life of pleasure, of contemplation, and of action. The first, taken in the sense of the vulgar, must be considered as little different from that of the irrational

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animals

* Ethic. ad Nicom. lib. i. cap. i.

animals below us. It is a course of passion, and not of action; and, like all the opinions of the multitude, it suggests only a vague idea of good, under the general denomination of pleasure *. It admits not, therefore, of being treated as a subject of moral import, or discipline. The second, directly opposite to it, is the most noble, and might be to man, were the human faculties suited to it, preferable, in respect both of excellence, and of good, to every other condition †. For those are not to be regarded who say, that it is sufficient for man, mortal as he is, to be intelligent in what relates to mortal condition. It becomes him, rather, to the utmost of his ability, to carry his aim beyond the narrow boundary of human life, and to act, in all things, in a consistency with the most exalted, and best part of his nature. By this means the happiness desired by men may be enlarged ‡, and rendered complete. But it must be acknowledged, that perfect felicity is a speculative idea, which holds forth a celestial *energy*, found only in the life of the gods: For, as man's being, and nature, are different from theirs, so what constitutes his felicity cannot be the same. He is not framed for a solitary enjoyment, such as that of contemplation. As a social creature, he is necessarily

* Ethic. ad Nicom. cap. 3.; et ad Eudem. lib. 1. cap. 8.

† Ibid. cap. 7.

‡ To the preceding note, it may be subjoined, that, while Aristotle animadverts on the moral schemes of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, as too abstracted and theological, he yet, as far as his Theology could go, coincides in his main principles with them, and here directly copies the sentiments of the latter. Beside those expressed in the text, nearly in Plato's words, he adds, according to his doctrine, and in a similar strain, that, by contemplation, an image, if not the reality of the life of the gods, might be attained, and that, in proportion to the length it went, and the assiduity with which it was exercised, so much this divine similitude would be advanced in degree, and, of consequence, felicity produced, not eventually, but in the very acts themselves, no less noble than beneficial. Ethic. ad Nicomach. *ibid.* This remark is made, not for the sake of calling attention to this passage alone, in which Aristotle, with the appearance of dissenting from Plato, and other philosophers, and giving his sentiments the show of originality, does, in fact, no more than repeat what was delivered by them, but that it may be taken notice of, as a charge that may be often brought against him; and of which, notwithstanding his many unnecessary and frivolous distinctions, the just grounds are discoverable in various parts of his physical, as well as his moral philosophy.

farly connected with others around him, and desires to act, not for himself alone, but in concert with those of his community, and both to perform and to accept a measure of suitable offices. The life of action, therefore, or the social and civil state, must be concluded the most natural and proper one to him; and in it must be comprehended the felicity of which he is capable.

That good is supreme, and the best, which is desirable in itself, and for the sake of which other things are desired *; itself being sought after on account of no other object. This is the proper idea to be affixed to perfect felicity. But honour, wealth, ability of mind, and even virtue itself, although desirable in themselves, are yet chosen in order to happiness. Their subserviency to that end, and their efficiency of it, are therefore to be considered, and that degree of these properties is to be assigned to each, which experience and reflection discover to be, not apparent only, but real, and well founded. But it is evident, that honour, wealth, and fame, beauty and strength of body, and even ingenuity of mind, are productive of felicity only according to the use to which they are turned, and that, being misapplied, they have a contrary tendency. The measure of them, also, that may be thought conducive to happiness, can never be ascertained, but must be allowed to vary, according to men's different tempers, and their situations in life. Desirable, therefore, as they may be in themselves, they can only obtain the name of good in a secondary and imperfect sense. They are helps, and minister to it, in concurrence with some other principle, which is that of virtue, the only efficient of the good of the mind; that good which, in dignity and value, can be proved the superior and preferable one to every other species of it. Congenial with reason, it may be accounted, and, like that pre-eminent faculty itself, the gift of the gods, or something divine and venerable †. Attainable always by the voluntary exertions of the mind, it cannot, like any good that is external and fortuitous, be exposed to accidents, or be lost by the injuries of time and fortune, but has the same stability with its principles.

How,

* *Ethic. ad Nicomach. cap. 5.*

pag. 150.; et ad *Nicomach. lib. 10. cap. 7. pag. 102.*

† *De Mor. ad Eudem. lib. 1. cap. 7.*

How, then, does virtue differ, as a principle, from that of the prudence of the mind, without which it can hardly be said to exist? No otherwise than as resolution, and voluntary action, differ from the counsels of the mind previous to them. When, in consequence of a judgment formed of the best good, and a choice made of it, in preference to that which is desirable in an inferior degree, the mind proceeds to a course of action adequate to its attainment, then is exhibited that excellence of the human soul called Virtue, and recognised as the production of its noblest energies. But their scope is not fully reached, until virtuous action be matured, and confirmed by habit and perseverance. There may be an aptitude in the musical instrument for harmony *, and skill in the professor of music; there may be a well conceived plan in the mind of the undertaker of a building, and preparation made of the fittest materials for it; but, until the piece of music be played, or the edifice reared, the one cannot be called a performer, or the other an architect. So it is in the matter of human virtue †. It must be found in the act, and is not consummated but by the habit. Men whose lives are

* Magnor. Moral. lib. 1. cap. 35. pag. 127.

† Evident it must be, that habit forms the chief distinction of a virtuous mind from its opposite. One man is hardly to be *morally* known from another by a single action, unless it be some extraordinary instance of virtue, which we believe to be inconsistent with, and impracticable to, a vitious mind; or, on the other hand, such an enormous transgression of every moral rule as appears irreconcilable with any sense of virtue. In other cases, a single action is not to be accounted sufficient evidence of a man's general temper and character. As it may have arisen from a transient humour, or accidental circumstances, and, as persons known to be of a contrary disposition may, for once, have acted in the same manner, the repetition of the action, or some performance similar to it, becomes indispensibly necessary; otherwise the proof of the character must be defective. There is, however, this obvious difference betwixt a virtuous and a vitious action singly exhibited, that, in the one, there is only a doubt entertained about the motive, or the power of the motive to it, and, therefore, a hesitation about the measure of commendation that is due, and whether it should be extended to the general character; but, in the other, there is the idea of positive ill; and the dubiety is not about approbation, which can never be given in any degree, but whether the vice marks the character as wholly depraved, or as only partially corrupted, and still leaving room for the intervention of the energies of virtue.

are destitute of all manly and becoming action *, are no more to be reckoned virtuous, than those who are addicted to sleep all their days; and such whose virtue amounts only to a few single and incoherent acts cannot be reckoned to possess that temper and disposition. Habit alone forms the character of the mind, and that of virtue, little promoted by theory or instruction, owes its advancement chiefly to use and practice. The discipline the mind receives in the early stages of life, from custom †, is well known. Men like or dislike, are fearful or bold, active or indolent, as use has disposed them. Nothing that has difficulty is readily, or justly, performed, until the doing of it be rendered easy and familiar by habit, which, having a powerful influence on the human sentiments and actions, must, therefore, be acknowledged necessary to the exercise of every virtue. Hence are instituted, in all states duly governed, those regulations which tend to train the bodies of the youth to manly vigour, and their minds to the early taste and practice of the laudable virtues. If it be objected, that virtue is debased by thus depending on extraneous and casual supports for her energy, it must be remembered, that the irrational appetites and passions upon which she acts, and turns to her purposes, appear no less foreign to her nature, and unworthy of her service. But we find not fault with the pipe, or the musical instrument, of whatever material it is made, while just notes and harmonious measures can be produced from it.

Virtue, which is thus proved to require that steadiness, and permanency, arising from habit, may, likewise, be supposed to include, in its idea, an unlimited exertion, or such an unrelaxed continuation of its impulse, in all instances, that excesses of it need never be apprehended as unsuitable. But this is so far from being true, in the morals of life, that a contrary rule takes place; and both reason and experience conspire to prove, that virtue consists in a *mean* between two extremes; and these a little reflection will discover to be *excess* and *defect*. In the aim or action of virtue, we may intend and *will* too much, as well as too little; and, where this is the case, we must infer, as we do with re-

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* De Mor. ad Eudem. lib. 2. cap. 1. pag. 151.
lib. 10. cap. 17. pag. 102.

† Ad Nicomach.

spect to two unequal magnitudes, that the *mean* between them is that which is less than the greatest, and greater than the least. Every function, whether of body or mind, serves to bring to our view this general rule *, as prescribed by nature, that *a measure is to be observed* †. The food which, used in due proportion, nourishes the body, when taken to excess oppresses it. Moderate exercise recreates the spirits, while that in which no rule is observed tends to debilitate, or to destroy them. As every corporeal action may be either overdone, or fall short of the requisite measure, so any exertion of the mind may be too vehement and transporting, or, being remiss, prove ineffectual and abortive. The extremes, in both instances, being faulty, men generally agree in condemning, alike, the excess and the defect.

If we were to consider the line of the virtues and vices as a series of energies, and to find a scale of arrangement for them, it would appear that the former, having a consistent and regulated energy, would stand together in the middle of the scale, while the latter, mared by defect or excess, would be properly disjoined from each other, and thrown off into the two extremes. So much is *mediocrity* the first feature of virtue, that, when tarnished in any degree, its character seems to be obscured, or lost. Without this predicament, the moral qualities are often hardly distinguishable from their contraries; but under it they may be well known. Fortitude would be improperly defined a total absence of fear, in the place, or time, of danger. He who is afraid of nothing is stupid or delirious; and he who is intimidated on slight occasions is a coward, or a fool. The virtue of fortitude, therefore, is found in a measure of courage alike distant from these extremes. Temperance is the *medium* between a too great and a too little compliance with appetite; and justice that between the excess of taking, or receiving, and the defect of giving. In a variety of other cases, it may be shown, that, to have the virtue, we must adhere to the *mean*; which is so much the more the characteristic of a moral office, as vice can never be reduced to any such standard.

* Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra, citraque nequit consistere rectum. HOR.

† Ad Nicomach. lib. 2. cap. 5. 6. 7. pag. 18.

standard. For, as Pythagoras said, there are many ways of error, and of evil doing, but only one of truth, and of doing well; and, it must be owned, that, to speak of a *mean* in that which is, in itself, excessive, or defective, is absurd.

Aristotle gives a table of the several virtues *, calculated according to his moral rule, and explains how properly they may be investigated by it. Yet, after all his reasoning upon the point, he is obliged to confess, that, if strictly taken, it fails of being true †; and that the *mean*, considered as the *criterion* of virtue, may be proved to have considerable variations ‡, and to incline rather to one or other of the extremes, than to be placed between them. The fortitude of a military hero certainly admits of a difference in degree from that of an intrepid, but peaceful citizen; and, in the day of action, it may be roused to a pitch beyond all sense of fear §. The temperance of Milo is not the same with that of an ordinary man; and the abstinence, exemplified, and laudable at a feast, would be blameable excess in one engaged to wrestle, or to run, at the public games. It is, more especially, evident, that the affections and passions that are allied to virtue must be allowed a scope, and extent, transcending the mean. Humanity, social affection, love of our

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kindred

* Ad Eudem. lib. 2. cap. 3. pag. 153.
cap. 4.

† Ad Nicomach. lib. 2.

‡ It appears here, from Aristotle's holding forth the truth of his moral rule, with all its proofs, in one passage of his Ethics, and his retracting, or correcting it, in another, that he had not at first collected all his thoughts upon the subject he treated; and it is plain from other instances, that, at times, he wrote without having thoroughly digested his sentiments. In the great variety of his writings this could not well be avoided; and, in the compilement of these for publication, place would be given to many pieces drawn up in the inquisitive form, and which, probably, had served for exercises in the Lyceum. It seems, indeed, to be a mistake too common in reading the works of this philosopher, as well as of Plato, to imagine, that, because a system of principles was aimed at in both, and much study employed by them to complete their theories, therefore every important question was to be found *dogmatically* resolved by them. But the contrary to this is manifest in many parts of their works, which often discover them to be more inquirers than dogmatists.

§ Ad Nicomach. lib. 2. cap. 5.

kindred and country, must be owned to have in them so much of the nature of virtue, that they can hardly be reckoned to run into extremes. Even the untender passions, when excited by justifiable motives, cannot well be restricted to mediocrity. Anger, indignation, and resentment, on account of violence or injury done to a brother or a friend, are no more to be limited by any precise rule in morals, than natural sympathy with our kindred, or patriotic affection. The dictate of the most rational philosophy must therefore have regard to the particular situations of persons, and the circumstances attending the case; and, if it mark, as a faulty excess, the degree of resentment for a suffering friend, or of grief for a lost one, it must be considered, that generally none, but he who is influenced by these passions, can know, or understand, all the just or excuseable reasons and motives he has to be impelled by them.

Upon these accounts, it is acknowledged by Aristotle, that his general rule of mediocrity is so far invalid, that, where one of the extremes, whether the excess, or the defect, participates more of virtue than the other *, the mean must be drawn nearer to it; and this happens in various instances. Thus, the entire want of fear is more consonant to fortitude, than even an ordinary disposition to timidity. Temperance consists more in the restraint, than in the indulgence of the appetites; and frugality is opposed, not so much to parsimony as to profusion. From this fluctuation of the *mean*, and the difficulty, in many cases, of determining how far it may be morally allowed to approach the extreme upon either side, the philosopher observes †, that so few men are to be found possessed of strict and perfect virtue. The exact discernment of it, and the practice, where its criterion thus becomes ambiguous, can be the excellence of those alone, whose minds assiduous study and reflection have enlightened. He, notwithstanding, maintains, that mediocrity, fixed according to right reason, is not only a certain and inseparable characteristic of virtue, but that moral principles must be rendered loose and vague, unless it be regarded as a general maxim, although it may admit of considerable latitude: And it must be confessed, that holding

* Ad Nicom. lib. 3. cap. 8. pag. 20.

† Ibid. cap. 9.

holding the principle of a certain *measure* in all things, is the best corrective to extravagant opinions that may be vented on the subject of morals, whether deduced from abstract reasoning, and speculative ideas of right and wrong, or from natural instincts and affections, or from the combination of both.

There is, however, one general rule, with respect to the variable mean, which prudence suggests, and that ought always to be kept in mind. It is founded upon the philosophic maxim, that all moral action is conversant either with pleasure or pain, joy or grief. These being the two great motives that induce men to like or to dislike, to act or to forbear, it is evident in which of them the defect of proper affection, and action, and the excess of what is improper, will commonly be found, and that the natural propensity to pleasure will draw too powerfully to its extreme, to allow virtuous motives to operate, and worthy actions, consequent to them, to be performed without reluctance, when some degree of trouble and hardship is to be endured. Of this hazard, the disciple of virtue will be sufficiently aware. He will, says the philosopher, dread the side on which the excess lies, as if it were Calypso's island of enchantment. That way the helm of the vessel will not be set, or the prow turned, but both rather in the contrary direction; so that the aversion to labour and pain may be overcome by manly resolution and laudable habits.

Here it may be proper to recollect what length we have proceeded in assigning the proper characteristics of moral virtue. It has been said to be that energy of the mind which its counsel approves as the best, and that prudence conducts, and habit confirms, and which, in respect of the vigour, or remissness of the affections and passions, may be held, in general, to consist in mediocrity. To this description, it must be added, that virtue is not merely a spontaneous *, but a voluntary action, and such as proceeds from the free choice of the mind. This properly distinguishes it from all irrational, instinctive, and indifferent energies, and becomes the test of the virtuous and vicious ones. After this ex-

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plication

* Ad Nicom. lib. 3. cap. 5. 6. 7.; et ad Eudem. lib. 2. cap. 7. 8.

plication of the characters of virtue, the philosopher goes on to show how much they correspond to, and are found in, the several moral rectitudes mentioned in his table, under the title of fortitude, lenity, modesty, justice, liberality, veracity, friendship, and others. His proofs upon these heads are spun out to a tedious length, and intermixed with so many minute and superfluous distinctions, that it is no wonder that the indefatigable disciples of the scholastic ages could only have the patience to translate at large, and to comment upon them. In the view here given of the fundamental principles of his Ethics, various of these disgusting intricacies have been omitted; and there will be still occasion to throw others of them aside.

To the more essential properties of virtue that have been described, Aristotle adds, as secondary qualities, those of its pleasure and utility. This part of his subject, although an instructive one in morals, is treated only in a cursory manner, while much attention is paid to categorical explications of the virtues more especially productive of pleasure and benefit. That delight and utility arise from the performance of moral offices, appears to be a principle rather assumed than proved in his theory. His argument is an abrupt, and general one, that the functions of virtue can never be executed but by those who have a relish for them; and that, being agreeable in themselves, and consistent with one another, which common pleasures are not, the satisfaction and comfort attending them must be constantly felt in their practice *. He then hastens to an inference from all his premises with respect to virtue; that, since it has been proved to be the good of the mind, which is the pre-eminent one, and attainable by a proper exertion of the human faculties, it follows, that a virtuous life is that state which is most natural, suitable, and eligible to man; and that, if, in this condition, it be asked, Is he happy? the answer must be, that he cannot be otherwise; since the means of happiness he is possessed of are effective of their end, and do so entirely coincide with it, that it is only in conception that they are distinguished from each other.

Yet,

* Ad Nicomach. lib. 10. cap. 7.—8. pag. 102.

Yet, if our inquiry be directed to that beatitude, which may be called the *supreme* one in human life, it must be acknowledged to be of a complex nature, and to include in it three several species of good; that of virtue, of bodily good, and of external circumstances. To the two last belong personal health, strength, and beauty, with a measure of longevity, and, beside these, a competency of wealth, noble birth, and fame. The happiness of life, although chiefly supported upon virtue, stands in need of these accessories *. Nay, the virtuous man, when altogether destitute of them, may be more properly called worthy and good than happy. Notwithstanding his fortitude may enable him to endure pain and want with composure, he must still be a sufferer, although not in misery. To pain, and perturbation of mind, he is not insensible, yet he will feel the former more than he is affected by the latter, as his habitual virtue will repress in him whatever is beyond a mediocrity of passion. In subserviency to virtue, the goods of the body, and of fortune, will also be employed, and improved by him to their proper use, and, by this means, be rendered the ornaments of his life. The sphere of moral offices will receive an enlargement, and virtue and beatitude be together illustrated and increased.

If, then, the proper aim and conduct of human action be consistent with the rational desire of every attainable good, the felicity of man may be pronounced to be the use of life †, in the maturity of age, perfected by the best habits of virtue. To perceive the propriety of this definition, we are called to observe, that, as all actions, in order to their completion, require some measure of time, so those of human life ought to have such an extent of it, as the gods, at the longest, have assigned to the condition of mortals, otherwise they must be deficient. The immature in years are, therefore, unripe in virtue and happiness. Of a few verses a poem is not composed, or of some single steps a dance. A like rule holds with respect to beatitude in the life of man; and it is necessary to say, that virtue is not perfected but in complete time.

Notwithstanding,

* Ad Nicomach. lib. 1. cap. 9.—11.
lib. 2. cap. 1.

† Ibid. cap. 6.; et ad Eudem.

Notwithstanding, in the estimate of virtue, it cannot be accounted, singly, and alone, productive of all the happiness competent to human condition, yet vice is to be deemed a self-sufficient cause of evil and infelicity, and to tend always directly to that end. It has been doubted whether Aristotle holds the moral virtues to be connected together, or to be separable, since he asserts, that a man may be wise, and yet not just, generous, and not temperate. The question is resolved by considering, that he distinguishes the natural propensities of the soul to certain virtues from its moral functions, which are constituted by habits. The former he allows to be accidental and vague, and often found disjoined from each other, while the latter, being dictated by the prudent counsel of the mind *, and maintained by like energies, have a tendency to combination; and, where the practice of one is thoroughly learned, the rest will be ready to follow in an amicable train.

Beside holding forth, in this manner, a system of Ethics, unconnected with any principles in Theology, which chiefly constitute moral obligations, there is another material omission made by the philosopher. No estimate is formed by him of the tendency and force of the primary instincts and affections found in human nature, whether selfish or social, rude or gentle, ungenerous or benevolent, and how they may be supposed to operate in man, and naturally dispose him, less or more, to the approbation and practice of virtue. They are, indeed, in his theory, of little account, as being the offspring of the irrational part of the soul, and no more entitled to the name of virtues than the blindest motions of the passions, until they be rectified, and moulded by reason, and the prudence of the mind. After such apparent disregard of the instinctive affections, it might be supposed that they would hardly be insisted on by him in the account of any of the particular virtues, or else represented as weak, selfish, and rather adverse to virtue. But this is not the case; and he makes no hesitation to express himself in a different strain, when he comes to treat of friendship as a virtue, or what is conjoined with it †. He also recites, as inherent in human nature, the tender affection
of

* Ad Eudem. lib. 5. cap. 13. pag. 188.
cap. 1. pag. 75. Ibid. cap. 14. pag. 83.

† Ad Nicomach. lib. 8.

of the parent to the progeny, and considers the sensations of it, reflected from the latter with cordial warmth; which, if abated by increasing years, or, in some measure, dissipated by other regards, is renewed in a more steady form; and the enlightened conception of a parent's relation, of a parent's care, of a parent's part done, is cherished as a tie of love and duty superior to all others. To this source of affection, although a fertile one of kindness to brethren, kindred, friends, acquaintance, countrymen, he confines not the social bond, but, adverting to other emotions of the human heart, he discovers in them indubitable proofs of that pure benevolence, that love of the kind, to which the Greeks assigned the peculiar name of *Philanthropy* *.

If self-love be natural to men, so also is affection to their species, as the likeness of themselves †; appearing in qualities of body and mind similar to their own, and in those sensations of pleasure and pain, which are communicated in a manner as lively, from the expressions of them in others, as when they arise in the breast of the individual. Friendship is, generally, contracted upon the intercourse and cordiality of two persons, cemented by time, and habits mutually agreeable. But, who has not, on some occasion, experienced its birth, or the tendency to it, almost instantaneously, and upon no previous knowledge of the person, or his character, who is the object of it? There is, in this instance, a direct evidence of the prevalence of the social and benevolent affection in the human heart. Without it, indeed, friendship cannot be properly constituted; although reciprocal benevolence may take place where there is no such intimate connection, which, in general, may be defined *an equality of benevolence, mutually felt, and not concealed*. Its kinds may be reduced to four, that of the propinquity of blood, of particular affection, of fellowship and hospitality; the second of them comprehending a philosophic love, as well as one of natural passion ‡. Sought after it may be for three ends; those of virtue, pleasure, and utility. True and stable friendship can only subsist between the virtuous and good; and, so far as it has not virtue for its principle, it must be, in proportion,

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* Ad Nicomach. lib. 8. cap. 6.
Ad Nicomach. lib. 9. cap. 5.

† Ad Eudem. lib. 7. cap. 5. pag. 206.
‡ Ibid. ad Eudem. cap. 2.

less perfect and changeable. Having vice, which is inconsistent with itself, for its motive, it can never be genuinely formed; and two persons, swayed by their irregular passions, can only, by accident, agree, or be found in equality with each other.

In general, with respect to the opposite nature, and efficacy, of virtue and vice, Aristotle holds, according to the doctrine of Plato, that the former was the orderly state of the human soul, or the harmony of its three constituent faculties, the deliberative, the vehement, and the immoderately sensual. If the piece adjoined to the *Ethics**, addressed to Eudemus, be not spurious, which may be alledged, he copies the sentences of his master so exactly, that they need hardly be repeated. Comparing the faculties mentioned to the three orders of a republic, he represents the virtues of prudence, fortitude, and sobriety, as forming the harmony, and proper vigour of the mind, in like manner as the just arrangement and exercise of the political functions in the state constitute its strength and well being. On the contrary, the soul's confusion and weakness is beheld in the vices, which being the natural offspring of folly, and taking the loose and incoherent forms of their original, blend timidity with fierceness, and insatiable desire with the sensual gratifications.

Such, then, is Aristotle's scheme of *Ethics*, taken in a general view, and in respect of its fundamental and distinguishing principles. It is that part of his philosophy in which he is reckoned, by some critics, to discover little or no invention, and to have supplied the defect of it only by a profusion of his logical distinctions; the more improperly thrown out in the subject of morals than in any other. Hence it is alledged, that his treatises of them, delivered in three separate dissertations, have, on account of their prolixity, and since the taste of the scholastic literature has abated, found few readers, and still fewer admirers. This criticism, however, if not quite unjust, is certainly not to be admitted in all its latitude. The latter part of it, indeed, may be owned a general fault that runs through all his philosophic works. As to the want of originality, it would be wonderful if any remarkable specimen of it had been

* Libellus adject. ad *Ethic.* ad Eudem. pag. 218.

been afforded. The ground was pre-occupied, and, howsoever fruitful, it had been cultivated by able and skillful hands; and to them had fallen its prime and most substantial produce. Invention had not here the same wide range as in physics. The great principles were to be found within some known tracts, which might be enlarged, but could not be varied. Yet, it appears that Aristotle made a bold effort, in the choice of his tract, and the display of his ingenuity in it, to give his moral scheme, as much as he could, the face of an original one. For the sake of having this reputation, some principles held, by preceding philosophers, to be essential and indispensable ingredients in every complete system of Ethics, were slighted by him, and upon others of similar moment, although not excluded, no stress was laid. The ground of these objections requires to be more particularly considered; but, even with the allowance of there being some truth in them, his books of Ethics may be pronounced to contain a large fund of useful knowledge and instruction, especially with respect to the exercise of the particular virtues, and the restrictions and modifications of which they are susceptible. In what relates to the dividing and distinguishing material questions, and cases of morality, he is not excelled, and perhaps not equalled, by any ancient or modern philosopher.

The most important and admissible objection to his theory of Ethics is, that it detaches moral virtue from all views of man's connection with any higher sphere of being, and proposes not that of the soul's immortality, even in the way of a probable argument. Disposed to contradict Plato's system, and to point out his error in representing human virtue in a light too abstracted, and depending on theological contemplations, he chose to consider it as proper to man, taken separately, and with no other relation, or tie, but that to his kind. Upon this hypothesis, the scheme advanced by him appears to be rather a political than a moral one, in which little or nothing is ascribed to rational theory, and its influence upon the mind, but all morality resolved into rules of prudence, and its duties into habits; constituted more by outward discipline, the constraints of civil institution and penal laws, than by internal sentiments, or the dictates of reason and philosophy. Thus, treating morals, not as a science, but only as a certain right state of the hu-

man mind, and placing virtue in the prudent disposition of its affections and passions, he will not permit its name to belong to any perception or sense of its intrinsic excellence, or to the quality of actions, alone, and separate from their actual and habitual performance. He does not, indeed, exclude the mental perception of the difference of moral and immoral action, but assigns to the former the titles of honest, fair, and beneficial, and, to the latter, the opposite ones, of disgraceful, odious, and hurtful. But this is done in a feeble manner, and with the faintest strokes, as if it was sufficient, in a moral scheme, to show how virtue might be constituted in man, without the conception of it as an intelligible principle, recognised and approved as a rule of action by rational beings such as the human, or without making any distinction between the motives to its practice.

While he disapproves and censures those systems which trace the foundation of morals in speculative ideas of the eternal relations of things, and of their differences, which cannot bring home to man the sense of virtue, either as a duty or as a desirable good, he runs, himself, into a similar error, by declaring virtue to be neither natural, nor contrary to nature, and that the instinctive affections being irrational, deserve no attention in the proper estimate of a moral principle, which always implies the judgment of reason, and a choice of action proceeding upon it. But, from what motives, it may be asked, is man induced to prefer one object to another, if he finds in himself an equal indifference to both? Is reason, or prudence, sufficient to teach him the love of himself, or of his species, or of sympathy with others, when no natural inclination disposes him to be so affected? The philosopher admits the prevalence of the social and benevolent affections, and delineates their extensive and happy energies, and yet allows them not to stand in the catalogue of virtues, but under certain conditions. In the same strain of doctrine, the person who aspires to do good, and whose soul is alive to every sentiment of friendship and generosity, being deprived of the means, or opportunity of practically exercising, to the extent of his wishes, these affections, is not entitled to the denomination of a virtuous character. He must have, likewise, along with external advantages, a length of life, in order to be sufficiently virtuous and happy. Embarrassed

raised in this manner, and inconsistent in his moral theory, Aristotle, notwithstanding his elaborate performance, marked as it is with many lines of knowledge and penetration, is not the author to whom the ablest modern writers on the subject have applied for instruction. The two, most distinguished with us, have borrowed their illustrations of moral virtue from Plato *, as a more eminent, and purer fountain; and the signal approbation given to the perspicuity and truth of their general principles, abundantly proves that they were not mistaken in their choice.—But we now resume the history of the Academy in its second stage.

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PART

* Lord Shaftsbury and Mr Hutchison.

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PART VII.

SECTION I.

Of Arcefilas, and the Middle Academy.—Of Pyrrho, and the Scepticism of the Pyrrhonists.—Of Carneades, the Founder of the New Academy, and the difference of his Scepticism from that of Arcefilas.—Two other Academies, called the Fourth and Fifth.

IT has been observed, that *Arcefilas*, being introduced to the regency of the Platonic Academy, innovated so much upon the doctrine of its founder, that it came to be called by a new name, that of the *second*, or *middle Academy*. He was a native of Pitane, in the territory of *Æolia*, where a patrimonial estate enabled him to live in more affluence than was common amongst philosophers. His first master was *Autolychus*, a mathematician, and his countryman *. He was next instructed in music by *Xanthus*, an Athenian, and then, becoming a student of philosophy, under *Theophrastus*, in the *Lycaeum*, he was engaged, from his intimacy with *Crantor*, to quit the *Peripatetic* discipline for that of the Academy. “I have lost in him,” said *Theophrastus*, “a youth remarkable both for ingenuity and a ready wit.” He had early made *Rhetoric* his study; and his brother *Maereas* would have persuaded him to chuse it as a profession; but poetry first, and especially the charms of *Homer*,

* *Diogen. Laert. lib. 4. pag. 244.*

Homer, and next his attachment to philosophy, diverted him from that course. He was now wrapt up in the study of Plato's writings; and when, upon the death of Crates, he obtained the government of the school, was believed to be a votary to the philosophy of its founder, until a method of exercising the students, different from that in use, discovered his affectation of novelty. Instead of delivering his own sentiment upon any point or head of doctrine, and, in case of a question being put by a disciple *, returning an answer that was generally acquiesced in as satisfactory, he called upon the students, in their turns, to declare what was their opinion on any particular thesis, and then allowed them to maintain and defend it, in opposition to him, or to one another, by all the arguments they could advance. Cicero, himself an Academician profess, according to Carneades's *new* form of philosophizing in the Academy, alledges, that Arcefilas did no more than revive the original practice used by Socrates and Plato; a position which can only be understood of occasional displays of the Dialectic art by these philosophers, who employed it not in the latitude, and never to the sceptical purpose, to which Arcefilas turned the disputation of his school.

But, whatever might be Arcefilas's meaning or motive for thus encouraging and promoting the spirit of disputation, and unlimited debate, amongst the students of the Academy, he soon found particular occasion for the utmost exertion of his own genius and taste for philosophic controversy. An antagonist appeared in the field, who, having been his fellow disciple under Polemo, and, from his more advanced years, acquainted with all the principles and tenets held by Plato, and his successors, was also distinguished by the subtilty of his definitions and axioms. Many of these, as framed by him, were new, or had the appearance of novelty. Stated, several of them were, in direct contradiction to fundamental points of the Academic doctrine. This opponent was Zeno, who now sketched out, in his theses, the principles of the

* Is enim (Socrates) percontando, atque interrogando, elicere solebat eorum opiniones, quibus differebat.—Qui mos, cum a posterioribus non esset retentus, Arcefilas revocavit; instituitque, ut ii qui se audire vellent non de se quaererent, sed ipsi dicerent quid sentirent. Quod cum dixissent; ille contra; sed qui audiebant, quoad poterant, defendebant sententiam suam. Cicero de Finibus, lib. 2. initio.

the Stoical Philosophy, which he founded, and rendered so famous. It proceeded, altogether, upon a corporeal theory, and admitted the being of nothing that was not body ; or, at least, that nothing could be made out of that, which, having no parts, was not a tractable substance. It was apparent that this position was subversive of Plato's triple world, and that the sensible one was only recognised. Arcefilas, engaging in the contest with his adversary, made use of those arguments by which Plato's followers proved, that sensible perceptions afforded no foundation for real knowledge, and that they went no farther than to beget an opinion of the qualities of external objects. As the controversy came to hinge, in a great measure, upon the credit due to the senses, he advanced a bolder assertion, and affirmed, that their testimony being variable and contradictory, could never be relied upon, and that opinion, formed upon its supposed veracity, must be only a presumptive one, and void of all certainty. Here he supported his argument by all those proofs of the fallacy, and errors of the senses, which had been adduced by Protagoras, Aristippus, and other sceptical philosophers ; the mutable tone of the organs of sense, their difference in different men, the various aspects of objects according to their position, the oar seen bowed, or partly double in the water, and the dove's neck, when turned round in the sun's rays, changeable into a multiplicity of colours and shades.

There are, said he, but two sources of our knowledge of external objects, the thing which affects the senses, and the opinion formed with respect to it ; and both of them are alike fallible *. By the same object, the senses are variously impressed ; they judge not what is true, and can only transmit to the imagination an ambiguous report. What, then, can the opinion of it be but a conjecture, partaking of the same uncertainty ? All our judgments must be reckoned of a similar stamp. Nature has thrown nothing but obscurity around us, without affording the means, or time in life, for dispelling the cloud. We have only the capacity of with-holding our assent ; and it is the part of a philosopher to

* Quod si omnia *visa* ejusmodi essent; qualia isti dicunt, ut ea vel falsa esse possent, neque ea posset ulla notio discernere ; quo modo aliquem aut conclusisse aliquid aut invenisse diceremus. Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. et lib. 1. ad fin.

to do so, as well with respect to what is unknown to him, as what he finds to be false. To say, with Socrates, that we *know that we know nothing*, is asserting too much. In every proposition, it is fit to interpose an *epoché*, or retention of assent; and we may soon find reasons for remaining undetermined as to its truth. He spent whole days in showing that various arguments might be adduced, of equal weight, to prove the truth or the falsehood of the most approved axiom. He was considered as the reviver of Xenophanes's doctrine of the incomprehensibility of all things; and Sextus Empiricus * pronounces him to have stood in an almost perfect correspondence with the Pyrrhonic discipline. He had, however, a hard struggle for reputation, in the subtilities of the Dialectic, with Zeno †, to whom the question being put, What was the distinction or definition of a true and of a false *visum*, or of the perception of either? the reply given him was, that there could be no definition of a true *visum*, but that it was otherwise perceived than a false one could be. But could not the one and the other appear under the same idea? That *visum*, answered Zeno, must be nothing, or an inconceivable, which is supposed to represent that which is not, in the same form, with that which is, and render its perception, at once, both false and true. Evident it was, that, if Arcefilas insisted upon the force of his argument, he could not pretend to prove, or disprove, any thing; whereas he only meant to declare, that, generally, in respect of the objects of sense, and the perceptions and opinions formed of them, there were such equal reasons for affirmation and negation, that assent, either way, was always to be restrained.

Cicero declares it to be his opinion ‡, that not rivalry of Zeno, which might be suspected, or obstinacy in argument, or the desire of victory in a contest which became so remarkable, that was Arcefilas's motive for engaging in it, but that his inducement was, to make the discovery of truth, which so many of the philosophers before him

* Sext. Empiric. Pyrrh. Hypot. lib. 1. cap. 33.

† Hic Zenonem vidisse acute, nullum esse visum, quod percipi posset, si id tale esset ab eo quod est, ut ejusmodi ab eo, quod non est, esse posset. Cicer. ibid. lib. 4.

‡ Ibid. lib. 1.

him had in vain attempted, and whose failure might well excuse his being involved in the doubts, found by them inseparable from every search after it. This may rather be considered as the apology of a friend, than a just representation of the procedure of the first disturber of the peace of the Academy*; especially as the Roman Orator, and Academic, takes no notice of the known allegation against him, that, in his philosophic capacity, he acted such a part as gave occasion to Aristo's satirical verse, implying, that he imitated three very different masters; having before him Plato, behind him Pyrrho, and Diodorus Cronus in the middle. Sextus Empiricus repeats the anecdote, with an explanation, which, taken together with St Augustine's account of the New Academy, forms the chief ground and authority of a note by Aldobrandinus, upon Diogenes Laertius's life of Arcefilas†; the import of which is

* Cicer. *ibid.* lib. 4. Diogen. Laert. lib. 4. Sextus Empiric. *ibid.*

† The very learned annotator, and critic, supporting his conjecture upon the authorities mentioned, alledges that Arcefilas had no thought, or disposition, to push his arguments, about the instability and fluctuation of the objects of sense, beyond Plato's doctrine, and that of his successors in the Academy, with respect to them, until he was animated in the course of his dispute with Zeno. He, then, not only contended with eagerness for superiority over his antagonist, in the use of the Dialectic weapons, but, finding that Zeno rose in reputation, while he contradicted, or dissented, from many of the tenets of the Academicians, he thought it expedient to throw around himself, and them, for defence, all the extravagancies of the most sceptical and sophistical disputation; whence he was held the institutor of a second Academy, that varied much from the doctrine of Plato, although this difference was only fictitious, in order to cover the former principles, still kept up, and taught amongst the friends of the Academy, from the assaults of Zeno and his followers. In this way, it is reckoned, that the debate about the fallacy or the certainty of human perceptions was transmitted down to Carneades's time, and, even then, for the credit of the Academicians, it was not let fall. The whole appears a most strained and improbable conjecture, resting mainly upon St Augustine's account. The device imputed to Arcefilas, may, indeed, be compared to the natural artifice of the *ink fish*, which, by emitting its dark fluid, interrupts the pursuit of its enemies. A practice similar to it has been, without doubt, often used by particular men, who wished to perplex, when they could not confute, their opponents in argument; but how it could be made the resource of a learned college, and be adhered to in the

is recited in the margin. But, without determining what credit it may obtain, we may here observe, that, upon comparing what is said by the authors referred to, there is reason to believe Arcefilas *prevaricated* in philosophy, and, by the contrariety of his manner of treating it, often rendered it doubtful, as Sextus Empiricus seems to admit, whether he dogmatized, or was really a sceptic. This duplicity, however, by no means appeared to be a trait in his general character, which was marked with many of the eminent qualities of virtue. Generosity, compassion for the unfortunate *, choice in his friendships, scorn of adulation to the great, set his dispositions to it in a fair and unsuspicious light. His master in geometry, Hipponicus, becoming deranged in his faculties, was taken by him into his house, and carefully attended to, until his recovery. He had, even when in health, the greatest aspect of dulness; and Arcefilas could not help saying, that geometry had flown into his *ever gaping mouth*. Various instances of the philosopher's liberality, and his indifference about wealth, are recorded; and his endeavours to conceal his munificence testified his distaste of all parade and ostentation of it. Entering the house of Ctesibius, or, as Plutarch relates it, of the famous Appelles, then in sickness, he was touched with the signs he beheld of poverty added to it. "I see nothing here," said he, "in a suppressed voice, but Empedocles's four elements, fire and water, earth and aether, in conjunction." He departed; but, returning soon, he pretended to adjust the bolster of the couch, and conveyed underneath it a purse of drachmas. The old woman in attendance found it with wonder.

Apelles,

changes of its constituents, is difficult to be conceived. One example of it, afforded by an individual, is here to be recollected. Dr Berkley, in order to confound the votaries of that philosophy which had only *quantity* for its object, denied, and, with ingenious and plausible arguments, endeavoured to confute every proof that could be given of the existence of matter, and left the Corporealists to seek, in his ideal world, the commensurations and proportions of body. The argument held by the Academicians, against Zeno, was of the same import with that maintained by the modern Metaphysician against the Materialists. Both of them, showing their acuteness in disproving, by ratiocination, what they could not but believe, exposed the perplexities of reason itself.

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 240.

Apelles, upon its being shown to him, smiled, and said, *this is one of Arcefilas's thefts*. On account of the many presents made by him, he was thought to affect popularity, although he intermeddled not with public affairs. He accepted, himself, the gifts of Eumenes, King of Pergamus, with whom he held some literary correspondence, but could hardly be prevailed upon to go to any of Antigonus's feasts. His manners, in private life, had more of Aristippus's freedom than of philosophic rigidity: Yet he was strict in the discipline of his school, and sharply animadverted upon any delinquency of the students. A pleasantry, however, in his expressions, often softened to them the acrimony of the rebuke. It also accompanied the general strain of his eloquence, which, without being diffuse, was persuasive. He testified, by several of his sentences, that he had the ready and apt conception requisite in them. Being asked, How it happened that various disciples passed from other sects to that of Epicurus, but none from the Epicureans to them? "We know," said he, "that of men eunuchs may be made, but not men of eunuchs." He is reckoned to have wrote no books, because he held no certain opinions. Instead of setting any value upon the Dialectic, his advice was, that it should be shunned *, as throwing all things into confusion. Logicians he compared to gamesters at dice, who are most delighted when they can trick one another. His saying, with respect to death, was more quaint than sentimental. "Of all evils," said he, "it is the only one, which, being present, gives us no trouble; and all our concern about it arises from its absence." He may be said to have outwitted his own adage; for, although death was not present, he exempted himself from the apprehensions of it. Having drank too much, he became delirious, and, in a short time, expired. He flourished, according to Apollodorus, about the 120th Olympiad, and died in the 134th, at the age of seventy-five.

The superintendence of the Academy was now assumed by Lacydes, the disciple of Arcefilas; and to him Diogenes Laertius inattentively ascribes the institution of the third, or *new* Academy; which, according to indubitable authorities, did not commence till the appearance of

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Carneades,

* Stobaei Sent. Sermo 81. pag. 472.

Carneades *, between whom, and Arcefilas, there was a succession of three Regents in the middle Academy. But, of these successors, Lacydes, Evander, and Hegesinus, so little either important or curious is to be narrated, that they may be passed over without any detail of their manners or tenets. In their place we have a character to introduce, that cannot be omitted, when now we are entered upon the ground of the sceptical philosophy, and have to consider, beside the progress it made in the academies of Athens, other particular sources of its growth; and, as it may be accounted to have had, although not its original, yet a most noted exhibition in Pyrrho, a native of Elis. From him a name was derived to the sect, which, properly, could be denominated from no leader, or by any principle of reason, or tenet in philosophy that was maintained. A *Sect* was, indeed, a designation as little applicable to this tribe of men, who, therefore, were called, variously, *Zetetics*, *Sceptics*, *Ephectics*, *Aporetics*; epithets denoting their inquiry after truth, their perspectives of it, their suspense of judgment, and, finally, their remaining doubtful of all opinions. Pyrrho's parentage, and condition in life, were too mean to afford him the advantage of education, although he is reported to have attended some masters in the liberal arts, and particularly in that of painting. He found his way, however, and became attached to Anaxarchus, a philosopher of Abdera, who attended Alexander the Great in his Asiatic expeditions †. The leading feature of Anaxarchus's philosophy was *apathy*, or the repression of all the passions, which is connected with moderation, or indifference, in opinion. These institutes he is reckoned to have learned from Metrodorus of Chios, who, no more than Arcefilas, was contented with Socrates's maxim, that he knew nothing. He performed the office of Alexander's monitor; and, upon several occasions, checked the eruptions of his vanity and pride. Having forgot himself, as it appears, in one instance, and expressed

* Cicer. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. Cujus (*Arcefilae*) primo non admodum probata ratio, quanquam floruit tum acumine ingenii, tum admirabili quodam lepore dicendi.—Post autem confecta est a Carneade, qui est quartus ab Arcefila; audivit enim Hegesinum, qui Evandrum audierat, Lacydis discipulum, cum Arcefilae Lacydes fuisset. Sextus Empiric. Pyrrh. Hypot. lib. 1. cap. 33.

† Diogen. Laert. lib. 9. Cicer. de Natura Deor. lib. 3. pag. 252.

expressed an opinion that reflected severely against Nicocreon, King of Cyprus, the hostile speech, although not followed by any prejudice, was resented, and cruelly revenged by that tyrant. The philosopher, thrown by a storm upon the coast of Cyprus, was pounded to death; while he exercised, in torture, that constancy of mind, which, in a careless hour, had escaped him.

Pyrrho soon showed himself to be of a temper fitted to personify scepticism in its most glaring shapes. Discrediting alike the testimony of the senses, the impulse of affection, and the plainest dictates of reason, he strove to act, even in the common affairs of life, like one who had a controversy with them all. It was not his part, who believed not the reality of motion in bodies, or of their action upon one another, and to whom every bias he found in himself was equal to another, to turn aside from a precipice, or avoid the shock of a waggon or chariot that came in his way. His friends *, and others, in pity to him, were often obliged to perform those services which he could find no reason, in theory, for doing personally. He carried this behaviour, at least, for some time, and when he was not liable to be much disturbed, as far as could consist with any regard to his preservation, and not to be accounted a person altogether delirious. His answers, to such as thought he might be easily foiled in argument, proved his faculty to be but weakly combated by their own. "You," said one † to him, "who hold life to be a matter of indifference, why do you not die?" "It is," replied he, "for that very reason, and because it is indifferent to me to live or to die." In cases where all men testify their liking or disliking, their approbation or disapprobation, their praise or their blame, he appeared to be unaffected and insensible. When he began a discourse before auditors, he continued it, without the least regard to their attention or their stay. He seemed to have to do with nobody but himself; and to resolve all the efforts of his mind into that of maintaining an indecision and indifference in all human opinions and sentiments. Sextus Empiricus thought it necessary to assign some reason or motive for his constant reading of Homer, independently of his assenting to the grammar,

or

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

† Stobaei *Sentent. Serm. 120. pag. 609.*

or the truth of the sentiments found in the poet *. He is not sure, whether it might not be a feeling of pleasure, such as is produced from the rehearsals of Comedians, or from a delight in the poetical tropes and figures : For, Pyrrho himself was reported to have exercised his genius in such compositions, and, when the companion of Anaxarchus in India, to have addressed a poem to Alexander, for which he was rewarded by the monarch with ten thousand crowns. It was a question more worthy of attention to have inquired, upon what motive or ground it was that Pyrrho, who considered the life of man to be, in any shape, a mass of contradictory opinions and affections, intermixed with vain hopes, and ineffectual desires, chose, as far as he could, to abstract himself from its ordinary course, and follow a line of his own, without having an opinion of it. It must have been abhorrence of error in speculation, or the apprehended evil of deceitful affections, or both, that disposed him to assume a deportment altogether singular in life, and in which, although exposed to outward perils, he would not, for the shame of his philosophy, confess, that common experience could teach him distinctly what consisted with his personal safety, and what not ; when all the conclusions of reason itself, in matters of science, appeared to him lame, and to terminate only in doubt and uncertainty.

Pyrrho, nor no man that acted or moved his body in the least, could, consistently, exhibit his hesitation and indifference in the degree he is said to have held them forth in theory. He could no more give a reason why he made any use of his limbs, or how he came to rely on their support, than why he distrusted his eye-sight of a perpendicular rock before him, or the effect of a heavy body moving near him, and in a direction opposite to his own. Appearances of such renunciation of the testimony of his senses, if at all assumed by him, can be understood only as some popular proofs he thought fit to give of his conforming his actions to his theory, which withheld him from entertaining any certain opinion with respect to any thing. Upon what special arguments he grafted his universal scepticism, we are not distinctly informed †. He
either

* *Advers. Mathemat. lib. 1. cap. 13. pag. 54.—56.*
Laert. in Vita, ad fin.

† *Diogen.*

either composed no books, or left nothing behind him in writing. Therefore, Diogenes Laertius only gives some hints of the topics he insisted upon; but subjoins to the account of his life a state of the Pyrrhonic disputations with the Dogmatists of every sect, collected from the writings of Hecataeus, Timon, Ænesidemus, Numenius, Nausiphanes, and others, who followed what was called the *Course* of Pyrrho. But these disputations are, by Sextus Empiricus, more formally arranged, and enlarged upon, in his first three books, under the title of Pyrrhonic Suppositions. If we may form a conjecture, what special arguments Pyrrho himself used, and how far they partook of the Dialectic art and subtlety, it seems probable, that, although he is said to have been uncommonly pointed in his replies, and in speaking to the question, that he dwelt chiefly upon those of the more obvious and vulgar kind, and that his objections to the veracity of the senses were those superficial ones observed before, and, weak as they were, still repeated. According to some fragments of his reasoning, his profoundest argument for the uncertainty of human knowledge was drawn from the short length it could go, and that the interior nature of things was for ever hidden from our view. How absurd and extravagant is it, said he, for us to decide upon any thing, who have only the surface of *what it is* presented before us? Does the sight of a few stones of a building enable us to judge of its architecture; or some words make us understand the value and merit of a lengthened piece of eloquence? This argument has been a capital one amongst the sceptics of every age; who, touched with some philosophic spleen, have always endeavoured to form this conclusion, that, as we know not many things, or all things, therefore we know nothing with certainty. All sentiments of what is honest or dishonest, virtuous or vicious, are said to have been resolved by him into positive institutions*; yet Cicero alledges, that he admitted virtue to be a necessary rule in life, but denied that there was any natural desire, or motive

* Sed alius alio magis, Pyrrho, scilicet, maxime; qui, virtute constituta, nihil omnino quod appetendum sit, relinquat. De fin. Bon. et Mal. lib. 4. This accords with his reply to one who asked, Why he talked with himself? "I am thinking *how* I can be good."

motive to embrace it. According to Ascanius, the Pyrrhonic way of philosophising, by a general doubt, was much admired; yet this approbation, having its main source in novelty, appears to have been of no long continuance, or else to have produced no considerable effect*; since, whatever Eurylochus, and Hecataeus, and even Aristo and Herillus, who introduced a limitation of the Pyrrhonic doubt, could advance in its favour, availed not to engage any number of followers. Nothing less than forming no opinion about any thing made a complete Pyrrhonist. This men must ever have found to be an impossibility; and, therefore, the ancient sceptics, generally, relinquished a topic revolted against by human nature; and the modern have not ventured to revive it. Arcefilas's argument, which approached the nearest to it, by denying a criterion of truth and falsehood, also underwent a qualification by Carneades, before his Academic scepticism, of the new cast, attained the prevalence and fame afforded to it by the assent of several of the Grecian wits, and some of the eminent and literary men of Rome.

Yet, as the Pyrrhonian argumentation found a patron in Sextus Empiricus, whose illusive sophistry has still some admirers, we shall enter so far into the detail of it, as may enable us to observe what similarity it has with the modern productions in the sceptical strain. The Pyrrhonists, abating something of their founder's extravagance, did not pretend to be unmoved with sensible phenomena, or to be destitute of affections, and opinions with respect to them. We yield, said they, as other men do, to the influence of desire and aversion, of custom and novelty, and the like impressions, at least in certain degrees. These *phantasms* are, in the ordinary course of life, obtruded upon us, and meet with our compliance from necessity, and a submission to the laws of our country, which teach us, that virtuous action is a real good, and vicious behaviour an evil†. But this conformity is a simple act, in consequence of the coercive power of the *phantasmata*, as they happen to occupy the imagination, without the question being stated, Whether or not they are; what they appear to be;

* Jam explosae ejectaeque sententiae Pyrrhonis, Aristonis, Herilli—qui in rebus iis, in quibus nihil, quod non aut honestum aut turpe sit, negant esse ullam causam, cur aliud alii antegonatur.

† Sext. Empiric. Hypotyp. lib. 1. cap. 11.

be; or any opinion or judgment being formed with respect to them. That there are such, and such phenomena, we allow; but all assertions relative to them, in which reasoning is concerned, are rejected by us as totally uncertain, or so problematical, that the arguments for them may be always subverted by others of equal force. Here, beside taking notice of the absurdity of complying with impressions without any judgment about them, it is to be asked, Whether the human mind is not naturally, and as cogently, induced to assent to the truth of certain propositions, as the imagination can be to yield to the appearances of things? and, farther, Why the mind should hesitate more in forming a speculative opinion, that, in its nature, may be neither good or ill, than in submitting to the constraint of objects, that present the one, or the other, or both? It is not, surely, of more importance in life, what abstract notions men conceive, than in what manner, and from what motives, they are to act; and, therefore, it must be mere obstinacy to pretend, that the former require from them hesitation, scrutiny, and discussion, which may be dispensed with in the latter.

It was a preliminary question, justly put to the Pyrrhonists by their adversaries, How do you, who deny that any thing can be comprehended as true, pretend to urge a true objection to our assertions? In answer to this, it was said, that the Dogmatists ought to explain what they meant by comprehension; since it might be taken either simply, for understanding any position in discourse, without affirming the *being*, or *not being*, of the things referred to; or it may mean, beside barely conceiving what the assertion implies, the admitting the existence of the things in question. In the former sense, the Sceptics hold themselves not excluded from comprehension; but the other meaning of it they left to be ascertained by the Dogmatists, who, as they presumed to have such knowledge of the being and nature of things, that they could immediately advance assertions with respect to them, might be reckoned to have finished their inquiries; which, yet, may be found so loose and inaccurate, that the Sceptics chose to begin their doubts with what are called their most evident positions. But this answer of the Sceptics was evidently an insufficient and evasive one. For, although they said that they opposed no affirmations, but only their doubts, to the *theses* of the Dog-

matists, yet these doubts must have respected some object of sense or reason, capable of being proved to exist, or not to exist, to be true, or to be false; otherwise they must have entertained doubts and difficulties about nothing.

The Pyrrhonists, however, were not ashamed to incur this palpable futility, and to declare both sensible and intelligible things to be alike incomprehensible. To subvert the credibility of the senses, *ten* common places, or reasons of suspending assent, were delivered by them; the whole a huddle of arguments; some insignificant, some specious, some grounded on appearances, some fictitious, and some consistent together, and others not; and the whole of them intended to prove, in contradiction to the instinctive dispositions of mankind, that the information of the senses, liable as they were to some deceptions, was to be credited in nothing; for, by a short and desultory argument, said they, the phenomena perceived by them are either all true, or all false; but some of them are found to be false; therefore, none of them can be proved to be true: And, why not as well conclude, that, if some of them be found to be true, none of them can be held to be false?

As the object perceived is one thing, the perception of it another, and what is intelligible about it a third, it was contended by them, that these three things could not be brought into connection, or joined together in the proof of any truth. And, what was more evident than, supposing the faculties of perception, judgment, and reason, found in the human constitution, to be incoherent, or taken separately, that man could not be the rational creature he is? yet, upon this most deplorable argument, which tears asunder all nature, visible and invisible, the line of the Dialectic is lengthened out, to prove that the sensible perception assumed singly, and the image in the phantasia, by itself, and the rational faculty, without having reference to either of them, nothing can be concluded. How wonderful, indeed, would it be if any conclusion could follow? When the Pyrrhonists alledged that our perceptions could be accounted nothing more than certain affections of the phantasia, which, for ought we knew to the contrary, might be chimerical, vain, and relative to nothing external; they may be reckoned to have led the way to the ratiocination used by the author of the *scheme of the ideal world*, whose capital argument

argument is, that we perceive, and can be conscious of nothing but our own sensations, which have existence by their being perceived; and, therefore, all objects must be ideal, and only found in the mind. Between the two arguments there was this difference: As the followers of Pyrrho asserted nothing, the possible existence of external objects was not denied by them; although they impugned every evidence of it: But Dr Berkley pushed his argument so far as to assert, that the existence of the material world was an impossibility. How he held that to be impossible which implies no inconsistency in the conception, and, whether illusive or not, is thought, by us, to be perceived, is a point in his metaphysical reasoning that remains to be explained by the admirers of his invention, and acuteness in argumentation.

There is, likewise, a similarity in the arguments employed by the ancient and modern sceptics *, to disprove any proper or intelligible conception of causes of things, whether corporeal or incorporeal; and, by disputations upon this head, to throw into perplexity not only physical principles, but all adequate grounds of moral reasoning. By the former, the ambiguity of the question is stated in the following manner: It may be alledged, first, that there is a cause; otherwise, no account can be given whence come augmentations, and diminutions, generations, and corruptions, or the effects of motion, as they are seen both in corporeal and mental agency; and, together with them, the orderly arrangement of the world. All these phenomena must be unintelligible, without the supposition of some cause: For, if none of them be in their nature what they appear, we must say, at least, that, from some cause or other, they seem, plainly, to us, to be what in reality they are not. Besides, if no cause intervened, all generations of things would be accidental and promiscuous, and a strange confusion of them, such as may be easily imagined, would take place in nature. But, in opposition to these probable reasons for the existence of a cause, others may be alledged of equal force; and an obvious one arises from this consideration, that, every cause being a relative, and having a reference to a particular effect, it can never be understood separately, but always in con-

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junction

* Sext. Empiric. Pyrrh. Hypot. lib. 3. cap. 3. pag. 112.

junction with the event produced by it. The effect must also be comprehended by us, before we can affirm that it has had this, or that, special cause, and not another; but, since the two, in order to be understood, must be taken together, the knowledge of both comes to fall under the false reasoning of the *alternate common place*; and we may as well prove the existence of the cause by the effect, as that of the effect by the cause. But, notwithstanding a father be a relative idea, and conjoined with another, we do not, therefore, conceive, or say, according to this dialectic inference, that the two ideas of a father, and a son, may be reciprocated, and the one substituted in place of the other. Their connection does not render them indistinguishable, nor is the peculiar property of the one mistaken, or confounded with the other. No more does any one, who understands the terms of cause and effect, ask which of them has the priority, or imagines, on account of their having a connected existence, that the order of that existence may be transposed. If a metaphysician, diving deep into the abyss of his admired science, should doubt, whether they may not co-exist, he must be left to explore, in his perplexed conception, how a thing may begin to be, and become, at once, cause and effect. In the reasoning of the modern sceptics, the Pyrrhonian argument is adopted; but has been cast, as it is thought, into a more advantageous form. It is contended, that we have no idea of power, or of *necessary connection* betwixt what we call a cause and its effect; and that this ignorance, only covered with a slight deception, hangs upon all our reasonings, both of the physical and moral kind. Thus, while we see nothing more in the operations of nature, but that one thing follows another, we pronounce, without knowing *how* or *why*, that *this* is the cause, and *that* the effect. In like manner, when we reason about human actions, we infer, that a certain measure of constancy obtains in men's dispositions and affections, and also in their tendency, when exercised, to accomplish special purposes; and this connection is formed in consequence of particular appearances of such consistency, observed by us in the actions and events of human life: Yet, say they, a single instance, or another added to it, is not sufficient to lead us to this inference. It is requisite, in order to it, that we have the experience of a number of them. But what do we discern in many instances, more than in one, to make

us conclude, that such an event will be necessarily productive of another of a special kind? We see not, and know not, what power or influence is generated in the one case, which is not found in the other; and, therefore, what, in physical and moral objects, is reckoned to be a necessary connection of two events, and such as that of the one producing the other, ought to be resolved into a feeling of the imagination, arising from habit, or the mind's aptitude to pass from one idea to a second, not necessarily connected, but usually conjoined with it.

The Pyrrhonists said, that the senses, not discovering to us the nature of objects, make nothing known; and the modern argument rests upon the same foundation. Our ignorance of the constitution of substances, and our acquiring moral knowledge by gradual experience, is insisted upon as a sufficient reason why we cannot distinguish causes and effects. But, sensible as we are that we *know that we do not know many things*, is our ignorance to be held as a proof that causes and effects do not exist in the world? This would be the strangest of all logical conclusions; and yet it is that to which the sceptical argument plainly tends. Not having omniscience, we know nothing, is its manifest result. Its improved form, although suggested by a distinguished metaphysical reasoner, does not discover much of the author's ingenuity*. The argument, more strained than specious, cannot obtain credit; supported as it is by the arbitrary assertion, that we have no *idea of power*, or necessary connection of cause and effect; when a clear and distinct source of it appears in the ability men find in themselves of moving their bodies at pleasure, and also from the faculty of exciting new and different conceptions in their minds. There is, perhaps, no idea so early, and constantly impressed upon us, than that we are, ourselves, the causes of events; and it seems to be, from a consciousness of this power, that, upon beholding a change made in the appearances of bodies around us, as of snow melted by the sun's rays, or of metal by the fire, we naturally, and with a kind of assurance, consider the body, which, acceding to another, is not changed, while an apparent alteration takes place in the latter, to be the cause of a new phenomenon, or of a visible effect. Hence the human mind acquires the idea of a power in some substances to operate upon others, although,
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* Vide Mr Hume's Philosophical Essays, sect. 7. *Of the Idea of Necessary Connections*.

for a time, it no more thinks by what means this is done, than how, in consequence of its *will*, motions are effectuated in its own, and other bodies. The notion, however, of a certain and necessary connection is entertained, until, excited by more mature reflections upon the phenomena observed by it, the mind, curious of knowledge, is induced to consider what that power, of which it has a general idea, may be, in particular instances, and how it can be conceived to carry its influence to the effect produced. Foiled, often, in making the desired discovery, it does not, therefore, quit its original conception, that there is an *energy* derived from the conceived power; and, instead of imagining it not to exist, because, in many cases, it cannot be traced, the mind eagerly pursues the investigation; and not only endeavours to distinguish, in the phenomena of nature, causes and effects, but to form probable hypotheses with respect to the different powers of causes, and how they may be reckoned to operate, both in the natural and moral world. In the loose transition of their ideas from one object to another, even the most vulgar minds do not rest, without distinguishing such of them as are relatives, and which they conceive to be, in a certain manner, inseparably connected; while, to the more enlightened views of reason and reflection, such a series of causes and effects is apparent, as testifies a regular and fixed constitution of them in nature; and, consequently, demonstrates the existence of an original and supreme cause, the ordainer and disposer of subordinate causes and effects, according to a general and intelligible system of them.

Here some notice might be taken of the satirical performance called the *Silli*, which the Sceptics extolled as a capital chastisement of the Dogmatists. It had, however, too much of the gross invective to deserve commendation *. Timon, a Phliasian, who, beside satires, wrote a number of tragic and comic pieces, was its author. His character, like that of his *Silli*, was an irregular one, but not despicable, or destitute of some philosophical merit. But, without further insisting upon the value of the work, often quoted by Diogenes Laertius †, we shall conclude the argumentation of the Pyrrhonists, with observing, from that author, that its whole effect was understood to be like that of *cathartics*

* Sextus Empiric. lib. 8. pag. 319.

† In Vita, lib. 9.

thartics in medicine; which, having removed all redundant humours of the body, at last throw off themselves. This is also confessed by their modern followers; and what else, but such contradiction, can be supposed the consequence of endeavouring to subvert reason by rational arguments?

Pyrrho may be reckoned to have preceded Arcesilas by almost forty years; and, before the *middle* Academy was changed into the *new*, by Carneades's accession to the regency, it may be computed that near a century intervened. About the last of these periods, however, there is a great contest amongst the Chronologists; and a palpable error is supposed to have crept into Diogenes Laertius's text *; where, upon Apollodorus's authority, the 162d Olympiad is assigned for the time of Carneades's death, which ought to be accounted that of his birth †. That such a chronological difficulty should occur, is the more surprising, upon considering, that the time of his flourishing is marked by the known event of his coming from Athens to Rome, in the quality of an ambassador ‡. But the disagreement of the Roman authors about the time of this embassy has rendered it a controvertible point; while, by some of them, the event is placed soon after the second Punic war, and by others at the end of the third; which makes a difference of at least fifty years, according to the Roman Calendar §. Cicero's date of the embassy, which nearly agrees with that of Pausanias, appears the most probable. He fixes it in the Consulship of Publius Scipio, and Marcus Marcellus; the former being understood to be that Scipio who destroyed Carthage in the 599th, or the 603d, year of the building of Rome.

Carneades was a native of Cyrene in Africa; but being educated at Athens, and affording various proofs of his progress in philosophic study, he was chosen to succeed Hegesinus in the Academic School. The disputes amongst the different sects of philosophers, especially the more eminent ones, of the Lyceum, of the Porch, and of the Garden, were
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* In Vita Carnead.

† Cicer. de Oratore, lib. 2. p. 154; et lib. 3.

pag. 187.

‡ Aulus Gellius, lib. 7. cap. 14.

§ De Claris

Orator. pag. 221. Pausan. Achaicis, lib. 7. pag. 418.

now carried on to the greatest height, which proved an encouragement to the disciples of the *middle* Academy to insist upon the uncertainty of all human knowledge. After its utmost efforts are tried, said they, what is the success of them? Opposite tenets, and controverted opinions, are their only consequence. Why, then, not hold all pretensions to scientific knowledge a fallacy, or delusion of the mind? Carneades, distinguished as he was for eloquence, saw, that a superior fame might be acquired by excellence in controversial reasoning. To be ready and alert in this faculty*, he abstained from all feasts, and even neglected his common meals; and, when he was to dispute with an opponent so able as Chrysippus, he sometimes prepared himself by physical evacuations†. Cicero highly extols his powers of elocution; and represents his voluble, and copious expression, as alike efficacious to command assent, or to overthrow objections, to whatever he proposed. His voice was sonorous, and he extended it with freedom. One day the *Gymnasiarch* thought proper to request him to lower his tone‡. "Give me then," said he, "a measure for my voice." "That," replied the other, "you have already in those who hear you." Although not unfertile in sharp replies, he often chose to use the pleasantry of his wit against the Stoics. He considered them to be accessories to his reputation; as he believed he could vanquish them in many dialectical arguments. "Without Chrysippus, and other disciples of the Porch, my fame," said he, "would have been nothing." Yet, as Arcefilas had done before him, he is reported to have spoke scornfully of the Dialectic art§. "The fish called Polypus, when its claws are too much lengthened out, bites them off. So," he said, "Logicians, exceeding in subtleties, confuted their own arguments." Thus, while the *Academics* arrogated credit to themselves on account of their faculty in argument, they were not ashamed to turn it into ridicule.

It was when this abuse of reason, and redundancy of wit, prevailed in Athens, that, to implore the release from a fine of five hundred talents, incurred by her citizens, for pillaging the town of Oropus, a deputation
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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 4. pag. 264.

ibid. lib. 3. pag. 187.

Sermo 81. fol. edit. pag. 473.

† De Oratore, lib. 2. pag. 154 ;

‡ Valerius Maxim. lib. 8. cap. 7.

§ Stobaei,

of three of her eminent philosophers, Diogenes the Stoic, Critolaus the Peripatetic, and Carneades the Academic, was sent to Rome *. Cicero makes it an argument that some taste of literature must have then obtained among his countrymen; because such learned solicitors were put upon this commission to the Senate. But the Romans of that age, except perhaps a few of the younger senators, most probably understood not what was the meaning of the name or profession of a philosopher. The Athenian deputies, however, wanted no more than to be heard, and understood in their own language, in order to excite admiration of their oratorical talents. Upon being admitted to speak in the Senate-house, the impression their elocution made was visible. The young nobility flocked after them, to be repeatedly entertained with what was no less surprising than agreeable. Carneades, whose oratory was most attractive †, chose one day to make the principle of justice his subject, and supported it by a train of solid reasoning; but, what astonished all his hearers, upon the next, he, with equal ability, as it seemed, disproved the whole of the arguments he had used. This refinement in reasoning was a novelty to the simple Romans; and Cato, the Censor, thought one specimen of it more than enough to be heard by them. "It is time," said he, "for us to send home those Greeks, with their versatile eloquence. Let them teach it in their schools; but the youth of Rome are not to be exposed to its seduction." The objects of the commonwealth required, indeed, a very different discipline.

In the *Academy* instituted by Carneades, the scepticism which Arcefilas had introduced, received some mitigation. Slight, indeed, it was, and but inconsiderable, in respect of the Dialectic argumentation, or the assent to be given to speculative propositions; which Carneades restrained almost in the same degree which Arcefilas had done, and upon reasons similar to those used by him ‡. According to Sextus Empiricus's account of Carneades's ratiocination, he found not, either in the senses, or the phantasia, or the rational faculty, or in their combination, an ability equal to the discernment of truth. Our perceptions, said he, constitute

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* Pausanias, *ibid.*
Majoris.

† Aulus Gellius. Plutarch. in Vita Catonis

‡ *Adversus Mathem.* lib. 7. pag. 167.

not a distinct judgment, but only a common *phantasia* of things; which, although it be the guide of all animals in the knowledge they have, and may be called their *light*, enables them not to make the proper discovery of objects. From its deficiency, and unsteadiness, the same things appear to us in different shapes, and those that are different to have similarity. Such vague perception cannot be deemed a true one; nor can the wise man assent to it as such. Does he then form an opinion about any thing *, without having an adequate perception of it? He may; because he will be sensible that he does no more than barely *opinate*; and that things false so nearly resemble those that are true, that no *criterion* sufficient to discriminate them can be found. The only credit, then, which the senses, or the *phantasia*, can claim, must be of an imperfect and doubtful kind; and whatever they represent to us can be assented to no further than as being *probable*, or *improbable* †. To admit nothing, in speculation, to be probable, seems to be repugnant to the affections of nature itself; and not to comply with verisimilitudes, as they may be discovered in matters concerning common life, would be a revolt from the human state ‡. The wise man, therefore, is, in a manner, disposed to allow them a measure of credibility. In this concession of a probable opinion that might be entertained and followed, about a true or false perception, the difference of the *new Academy* from the middle one chiefly consisted; but it was not understood to be the concession of such a judgment of what was true, in the objects of sense, or imagination, as would afford ground for positive and incontestible assertions with respect to them. It was even confessed by Clitomachus, the friend and associate of Carneades, that he never could understand what opinion that philosopher held, as a probable one, about
any

* Sed ut illa habet (Carneades) probabilia, non percepta, sic hoc ipsum, *nihil posse percipi*. Nam, si in hoc haberet cognitionis notam, eadem uteretur in caeteris; Cic. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 31. Ibid. pag. 25. Licebat enim nihil percipere, et tamen opinari; quod a Carneade dicitur probatum.

† Etenim is quoque, qui a vobis sapiens inducitur, multa sequitur probabilia, non comprehensa, neque percepta, neque assensa, sed probabilia veri; quae, nisi probet, omnis vita tollatur; ibid.

‡ Etenim contra naturam esset, si probabile nihil esset; ibid.

any thing; and it is apparent, that, in his argumentations with the Stoics, and other adversaries, he maintained, that nothing could be truly perceived, or, in reason, comprehended. Yet, to authorise the direction of human life, according to some rules of reason and morality, he distinguished what he called an *emphatic*, or probable *phantasia* of things, from an *apemphatic* or improbable one. What was understood by these two conditions of the human mind *, Sextus Empiricus has minutely stated; and how the *phantasia* may be *distracted*, or *undistracted*, less or more attentive to its objects, active in the survey of them as particulars, and collective of the clearest judgment of them, by a *circumcurrency* over their whole evidence. But, in place of this absurd and unintelligible account of the imagination performing the work of reason, and, after all it is supposed to do, acquitting itself in the lamest manner; we shall here bring into view what has a more splendid appearance, the distinguished *essay* of the Roman Orator, and Academician, to maintain the reputation of Carneades's school, or display that species of scepticism which was professed in the New Academy.

In no part of Cicero's Philosophical Dialogues do we find such an introduction to what he, as a disputant, was to deliver, than in the middle of the fourth book of his Academic Questions. He there declares that he felt himself under an emotion of anxiety, almost equal to what he had experienced in rising up to some of his greater Forensic pleadings. Suspected, as he might be by some, of engaging in the controversy from improper motives, he thought it requisite to signify that he was free, and ready to emit a solemn protestation to the contrary; and that, uninduced by a propensity to disputation, or the vain hope of shining in it, he was only conscious of an honest desire of finding out the truth. He was called upon to make the reply to Lucullus's vindication of Antiochus; who, from being a strenuous Academic, and supporting, with his own ingenuity, Carneades's sceptical arguments, had at last found reasons for abandoning them, and adopting, in many things, the principles of the Stoics, which he thought not inconsistent with those of Plato, and the Old Academy. As Lucullus had not only stated

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Antiochus's

* Ibid.

Antiochus's objections to the sceptical ratiocination, but added, from his own fund of knowledge, others tending to reprobate it upon the whole, it was Cicero's part to undertake the general defence of the school he followed; a task that required acuteness and skill in the art of reasoning, and a thorough acquaintance with the tenets of all the different sects of philosophers. In these respects, the two books that remain, of four he is reckoned to have composed on this extensive subject, are a signal testimony both of his genius and erudition. They have, however, in many passages, the mark of that studied artifice, and capricious subtlety in disquisition, which was thought allowable in the Dialectic, while the practice of it turned chiefly to the advantage of the Academics; Lucullus complains of their availing themselves of the *Sorites*, and other sophistical fallacies, by means of which all argumentation might be twisted, and untwisted, without end, like the *web* of Penelope *; and Cicero's reply is, that it was not the fault of the Academics if they found the Dialectic so lamely contrived, or so ill understood, as to admit of these versatilities. His controversial reasoning, therefore, against any certain perceptions of truth by the human mind, is not, or but little, of the general kind. It is almost wholly a disputation upon the dialectical conclusions of the several sects of philosophers, and especially those of the Stoics; which, as they were not consonant with one another, and often unascertained in their meaning, could be the more easily confuted. Having the same argument to plead, of the disagreement of the other philosophers in their physical and moral principles, he expatiates upon it; and concludes, as with a complete apology for the Academic scepticism, and what even gave it an undeniable triumph, that, since a consistency, either in ratiocination, or in tenets, could not be found amongst them, down from Thales to Epicurus, or from Socrates to Philo, or Antiochus, that the discovery of truth, or of certain principles in philosophy, was no further attainable than with the hesitation and suspense adopted in the New Academy. Did he expect to find a perfect or unexceptionable dialectic, or an incontestible system of physics,

* Quid quod eadem illa ars, quasi Penelope telam retexens, tollit ad extremum superiora? Utrum ea vestra, an nostra culpa est?

physics, or of morals, in the writings of one of them, or of some of them, or of all of them taken together? The first supposition could hardly be made. The second, considered as respecting the dialectic, and moral principles, might have been verified; at least so far, that it would not have been disputed, whether, by the one, a true proposition could be known from a false, and, at least, some general rules of right reasoning established; and whether, in the other, its fundamental and most important tenets were recognisable, and admitted of a rational and just proof; if obstacles well known, and not easily to be avoided amongst men, had not stood in the way of such agreement. The Roman Academic himself appears to have been not insensible to their influence, and even, in some respect, to consider the yielding to them as laudable, when he makes it the encomium of his sect *, that, by reserving to themselves the entire freedom of judging in all things that were the objects of knowledge, they were the more disengaged from every prepossession, and obliged to regard no position, or precept, which, obliquely, challenged assent, on account of the name and reputation of its author. To renounce authority, to impugn and subvert what had been advanced by others before them, and to hold themselves forth as inventors in science, has been less or more the disposition of the men of genius in all ages and nations, and was too much the characteristic of the Grecian wits and philosophers, to produce evidence of that agreement in their theories and reasonings, which might have taken place, at least amongst the few, upon the supposition of an unbiassed exertion of their rational faculties. But, having the vanity of men, they often affected, and made the shew of disagreement with others, where there was no difference, in their tenets; and if, with some, there was moderation or reserve in this respect, their expounders, in case of any dubiety in their expressions, were more apt to understand them in the sense of dissenting than of concurring. What, amongst the smaller number, was thus, in a great measure, repressed, could have yet less success among the all, or the many.

To

* Hoc autem liberiores, et solutiores sumus; quod integra nobis est judicandi potestas; neque ut omnia, quae praescripta, et quasi imperata sint, defendamus, necessitate ulla cogimur; Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. initio.

To impute diffimulation to Cicero, and, notwithstanding his solemn declaration of candour and sincerity in the general argument to be sustained by him, and to alledge that he feigned a conviction, which then he had not, would be unfair, and unjustifiable, and what his character for veracity might well confute. Yet, it may be said, that the honestest and ablest men may, at different periods, think differently, especially with respect to the validity of arguments, by themselves acknowledged to be of a perplexing and doubtful kind; and, further, that the perusal of the Roman Orator's other philosophical works will hardly suffer any one to believe, that, upon the whole, and in his general sentiments, he was inclined to maintain the scepticism of the New Academy. That he professed himself a disciple of that school, and preferred the unrestricted freedom of inquiry and disputation exercised in it, to a partial attachment to any sect, is unquestionable. But how far he carried his academic retention of assent, and whether it equalled the degree of it assigned to Carneades, is a point not to be determined. The question, indeed, is of that nice kind, that no man professing to scepticise could easily answer it to himself, or say, with precision, to what length his *doubt* was extended *. We know, from his own testimony, that he disavowed that arrant and boundless scepticism, which alledged, that nothing was discoverable, by reason, as a truth, nor any rule to be owned as a certain one in the actions of life; and besides, that he considered the difference between the Academics, and those called the Dogmatical Philosophers, to be no more than this, that the latter held their tenets to be indubitable, and true, while the former admitted many things to be probable, and what they could easily follow in life, but found difficult to be advanced as true assertions. They, says he, acknowledge certainties and uncertainties; we, probabilities and improbabilities; yet
against

* Occurritur autem a nobis, et quidem a doctis, et eruditis, quaerentibus; fatiscne constanter facere videamur, qui, cum percipi nihil posse, dicamus, tamen et aliis de rebus differere soleamus, et hoc ipso tempore praecepta officii persequamur. Quibus vellem satis cognita esset nostra sententia: *Non enim sumus a quorum vagetur animus errore, nec habeat unquam quid sequatur.* Quae enim est ista mens, vel quae vita potius, non solum disputandi, sed etiam vivendi, ratione sublata?

against all things we dispute * ; because probabilities themselves cannot be evinced, without every question and argument, for and against them, being fully discussed. We ask then what is to be understood by the concession first made, that the Academics did not scepticise in the boundless latitude of those who held no certain rule of reason, or maxim in life ? If any probability could be no otherwise made apparent, than by subjecting it to the dialectical scrutiny, it is plain, that its discovery would be rendered as vague and problematical, as the most extravagant sceptics held any certainty or truth to be. They could not, and did not, decline the examination of every position by the dialectic ; which, they had judgment enough to see, could never be made a complete directory in reasoning ; but rather, in the manner in which it was eked out, with variations, amongst the different sects, that it would serve, as they wished, to engender and multiply contradictions and fallacies. Either, therefore, we must suppose, when the Roman Orator declared he had no other motive for taking the broad ground of the sceptical argument, but that of the just investigation of truth, he over-rated the efficiency of the dialectic, and believed the display of it sufficient to accomplish his aim ; or that, notwithstanding he knew it led to perplexities, and the embarrassment of reason, he yet thought it not unfair, or prejudicial to the discovery of truth, to state these ambiguities in all their extent ; supposing, according to the common saying, that great was the force of truth, and although it might be somewhat obscured by its adversaries, it would finally shine forth, and prevail.

But, in whatever way Cicero thought his supporting the argument for general scepticism allowable, and consistent with the declaration of his own Academic doubt being, in some degree, qualified, it is to be remarked, as a consideration obvious to the plainest understanding, that, if he took up the dispute upon the footing that nothing was comprehensible, either by the senses, or the perceptive faculty, or by reason, it was an illusive one, and could not pretend to the discovery or proof of any thing.

* Contra autem omnia disputantur a nostris, quod hoc ipsum probabile elucere non posset, nisi, ex utraque parte, causarum esset facta contentio ; De Officiis, lib. 2. pag. 374.

thing. You may, says Lucullus, as well, after depriving a man of his eye-sight, alledge that external objects might still be discerned and distinguished by him; for, *you had taken away none of the things that stood before him.* He observes, justly, that he had consented to do what, in the judgment of several eminent philosophers, ought not to be done; when he was about to prove what was true to the conviction of those who asserted that nothing could be proved. Antipater, the Stoic, therefore, was reprehensible, who gave way to this fallacious practice, which furnished occasion to require definitions of things that were by no means necessary for understanding them, and the framing of which tended only to perplex what was in itself sufficiently clear and manifest. Such were those required of the meaning of the perception, of the knowledge, and comprehension of any thing. For, what other words, were Cicero himself to invent them in the Roman language, could better signify what all men understand by the common ones, when they say, they perceive, they know, or comprehend this or that object? With respect to the certainty of what is perceived, the evidence of it must be found in every man's mind; and, unless it be apparent there, it can never be demonstrated to him. Things, therefore, there are, which carry to the mind their own evidence alongst with them; or the mind is the *measure* to itself of their perspicuity. Hence no description or definition of a true *visum* was given by Zeno; but that it was otherwise perceived by the mind than a false one could be; and, unless the rational faculty be admitted to make the distinction in some competent way or other, an end must be put to all inquiry, or discourse, about any object, either of the senses or of the mind.

Lucullus states the four great heads of argument, by which the Academics proved that nothing could be perceived. The first is, that, of things seen, some are true and some false. The second, that a false *visum* cannot be perceived; and that which is true is still such as to be under the predicament that it may be false. The third is a conclusion, that, where there is no difference betwixt the *visa*, it cannot be that some of them should be perceived and some not. A set of arguments, more disjointed than these, he observes, could hardly be found put together in the proof of any thing. For, granting the first half of the second position,

position, and the whole of the last, which is the utmost that can be allowed, How is it possible, by any subtlety in dispute, to connect the remainder of the second proposition with the first *? How is it to be asserted, without the most absurd contradiction, that some perceptions are true, and others false, and yet that there is no perceptible difference betwixt them? Can there be a false visum known, and no true one? or, are we to say, that we have a faculty of knowing error, without any sense or perception of truth?

To these sketches of Lucullus's confutation of the sceptical ratiocination, we shall subjoin some specimens of Cicero's manner of replying to such arguments, that we may judge whether he who composed them in Lucullus's name, does not, in his answer to them, appear to play the part of a wrangling disputer, and to forget altogether that of a candid inquirer after truth. The introduction to his reply may be quoted as a testimony against him. In it, instead of objecting to, or acquiescing in, any of Lucullus's general arguments, he takes up the extraneous, and ridiculous question, Whether the *wise* man could *opiniare*, or hold a sentiment that was doubtful, and not fully comprehended by him. Lucullus had said, without pretending to determine the point, that it appeared to him a certainty that the wise man would not *opiniare*; if it was taken in the sense of his assenting to any thing false, or beyond his comprehension. It is, then, says the Academic, your concession, that the wise man does not *opiniare*. May I not, therefore, assume this argument against you? If, at any time, he assents, he will necessarily *opiniare*; but it is granted that he never *opiniates*; and, therefore, he cannot give his assent to any proposition. To give some cover to the glaring futility of this ratiocination, he puts Lucullus in mind, that the Stoics maintained that their wise man never *opiniated*. He then adds, that, allowing there may be, as these philosophers said, a comprehension of something, yet, to the Academics, this was not satisfactory, when they considered how slippery

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and

* Maxime autem conveniuntur, cum haec dua, pro congruentibus sumunt, tam vehementer repugnantia; primum, esse quaedam falsa visa; quod cum volunt, declarant *quaedam* esse vera; deinde, ibidem, inter falsa visa, et vera nihil interesse. At primum sumpseras, tanquam interesset. Ita priori posterius, posteriori superius non jungitur. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 19.

and dangerous the very custom of assenting proved. Lest we do it rashly, and agree to what is false, or unknown, let us rather altogether with-hold it. My assumption is, that there is no true perception; and it is your concession, that no wise man opiniates. These being taken together, it will follow, that all assent is to be restrained. But think whether you would not rather choose to say, that, in some things, the wise man may entertain an opinion. You declare neither way. The controversy, therefore, must proceed against my general assertion, that nothing is to be truly perceived. Hardly could the Roman Orator, in so few sentences, have shown more of the subtle Dialectician's address and evasion.

It requires attention to his close and abbreviated style, but no great penetration, to be sensible that he enters but superficially into the main arguments advanced by Lucullus, and often flights, or turns them aside, by some logical subterfuge, without taking off their force. As, beside the common topics used to disprove the testimony of the senses, the Academics alledged that of the similarity of objects to be a main cause of deception, Lucullus, anticipating this objection, had admitted that many things were undoubtedly like to others; as eggs to eggs, bees to bees, wolves to dogs, and several impressions of the same seals to one another, but that these similitudes were to be reckoned of no consequence in themselves, and could be of as little significance to the Academic argument, since, although they were like, they might be known not to be the same; and, if not always individually distinguished, yet they were so according to their kinds and classes. Even in the likeness of twin-brothers, such as the two Servilii, who were said to be often mistaken for one another by Cato, twice Consul with one of them, a difference was surely perceptible; for at home, and amongst their domestics, it is not alledged that they were undistinguishable. Attentive and close observation makes us perceive disparities in things which were long thought to have an entire resemblance. And, indeed, when the infinite variety of nature, discoverable to the eye, is considered, it may be denied, according to the doctrine of some philosophers, that, upon a narrow scrutiny, one hair, one pile of grass, or grain of sand, could be found perfectly like to another. Descanting upon this argument,
Cicero

Cicero says, It is a position of the Stoics, and not very credible, and which may be confuted, that there are in nature no perfect similitudes of things. But I shall not contend the point. It is enough for my argument, that, in many instances, objects appear to us to be such; and that we have no mark, no rule, to direct us in the knowledge of their differences. Nature, wise as she is reckoned to be in the fabrication of man, has not given us organs of sense fitted to such accurate perceptions of them. But there is, plainly, a want of a *criterion* of truth in all things, and no less in the judgment of the mind about our perceptions, and in all our dialectic reasonings, than in respect of the outward appearances of objects. Notwithstanding the Academics insisted so much upon the want of a criterion of truth, it may be affirmed that they neither could explain, or conceive what they meant by it, further than what may be understood by a want of the enlargement or greater perfection of the human faculties. A *criterion of truth* is a solecism in speech, founded on an absurd conception; as if truth could have any other *test* but that of its own perspicuity to a rational mind, and that every species of truth, physical and abstract, moral and divine, should be equally perspicuous, by means of an imaginary *criterion*. In the perception of external objects, the fiction of it would suppose a kind of evidence attainable, beyond what the human organs of sense, aided by reason, can admit. In abstract, or dialectic reasoning, it would adduce a proof of *truth being true*; and so, as the Sceptics argued, another proof might be wanted of the one adduced, and of that another, without end. In truths of a moral kind, it would either confound certainties with probabilities, or else divide itself into a variety of criteria, for distinguishing and marking the several degrees of rational evidence. It would appear, then, that *the Philosophers stone*, sought after by the Chemists, is not a greater *chimaera* than such a criterion of truth, as the ancient Dialecticians and Sceptics insisted upon as a *desideratum* in nature. But, as the one is not to be found in the corporeal world, so neither is the other in the intelligent one; the latter being yet more inconceivable than the former, and, supposing its possibility, demonstrable from reason, to be altogether inconsistent with the human constitution, and that of the sublunary system to which it belongs.

How hard a condition is it, says the Academic again, that a wise man going a shipboard, to sail from hence to Puteoli, distant only thirty furlongs, can have no comprehension of his accomplishing the navigation according to his wishes! Even with a good vessel, an able pilot, and in the present calmness of the sea, it can appear no more than probable to him that he will arrive in safety. Here the Dialectic argument seems to be contradictory; when the wise man is said to have no comprehension of his making a safe voyage, and yet to perceive, or comprehend the probability of it. Lucullus had observed, that it was an absurdity in the Academics to say they followed probabilities, when they *found no impediments to it*. How, says he, can you not find impediments, asserting, as you do, that truths vary so little from falsehoods, that there is no proper perception of their difference? In this respect, Arcefilas was more consistent than Carneades, if the latter held the same position with him, that nothing was truly perceived, and yet declined the natural inference, that no assent or approbation was to be given to any proposition. For why, indeed, should it be yielded to what men say they do not comprehend? The mind, it is added by Lucullus, does not assent but upon some apparent ground of truth; no more than the natural appetites and affections are moved with the desire of objects strange, or unaccommodated to them. How the first, or early impressions made on the senses, are, some of them, affected, and others repelled, it may be difficult, perhaps impossible, physically, to explain, or to understand. But evident it is, that there is a memory preserved of the one kind and the other; and that the mind's discernment, gradually unfolding itself, acknowledges the just experiences of the animal nature, and by more extensive observations of objects, and their effects, confirms these experiences, where doubtful, and enlarges them, where defective, in such a manner as to rest assured, not only of the truth of its perceptions, but, in the business of human life and manners, to form upon them those rational conclusions called *knowledge*, or *the wisdom of man*, which exhibits a determined approbation of one kind of action in preference to every other, and a perseverance in it, so signal in the virtuous man, that no hardships, no outward distresses, have power to abate his sense of duty, or alter his conduct. Yet, in contradiction to nature, reason, and experience, the Academic says, there is
nothing

nothing truly perceived, nothing comprehended, or known by him. But enough has been said, to prove that Cicero, no more than any other espouser of the sceptical arguments of the New Academy, could support them with any shew of reason, without incurring contradictions, and contending, not for the discovery of truth, but for an apparent victory, by help of the perplexities of the Dialectic.

Clitomachus, by birth a Carthaginian, but trained up at Athens under the discipline of Carneades, succeeded him in the regency of the Academic school. He joined industry to natural genius, and was conversant in the tenets of the Peripatetics, Stoics, and other philosophers, while his wit, no less remarkable, according to Cicero *, than his master's eloquence, or Melanthius the Rhodian's sweetness in discourse, was chiefly directed to maintain the credit of his own sect, by the explanations he published of Carneades's ratiocination. The substance of them is given us by the Roman author, from a book addressed by Clitomachus to the Latin poet Lucilius, and upon the subject of which he had also wrote to Censorinus the Consul. They are a summary of the Academic reasons for withholding assent, but not in the least clearer than those that have been mentioned. We do not, says he, as is alleged, take away the sense of colour, taste, or sound, but only assert that there is no invariable mark of what is true or false in them. By what other mark could they be known, but from that set upon them by the senses, unless they were to be perceived otherwise than by the intervention of the senses? But, *having explained his meaning upon this*, says Cicero, he proceeds to show how the wise man had a *double* way of restraining his assent; one was, to yield it in no respect, and to nothing whatsoever; another, by which he sustained himself in a disposition to answer to no question, so as to affirm or deny. By the first, he excluded all approbation of any thing; by the other, following probability, as he found reason for it, he might answer *yes*, or *no*. For one, who universally with-holds his assent, is still moved, and acts something; and so the *visa* exciting him to action are maintained, and thus, also, are those, about which, being interrogated, he may make his response
either

* Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 14. Diogen. Laert. lib. 4.

either way, yet without assent, and only as to a thing *seeming* to him to be so: Nor were all *seemingly* probable phantasia to be admitted, but those only against which there lay no *impediment*. Such is the corrected and illustrated account given of the wise man's management of himself, as to assent, or dissent; so artfully is he made to deal with his *visa*, and to prove, evidently, by his proceeding, that there was nothing perspicuous. It was no wonder that Clitomachus, according to Stobaeus, compared the Dialectic to the moon *, which never ceased to increase, or decrease; although the decline of the Academy, from Arcefilas's time, and its revival under Carneades, had not been alluded to by him in the comparison. Rhetoric, he is said to have rejected as a pernicious art †, and to have joined in opinion with Critolaus, the Peripatetic, for excluding it from the cities. He must, surely, have found its use, or employed other arguments than his sceptical ones, in composing his book on *Consolation* to his countrymen, when totally subjected to the Roman power ‡. His death, which ensued thirty years after his admission to the regency, was, in the manner of it, as reported, a contrast to Carneades's behaviour in the prospect of the fatal hour §. Having fallen into a lethargic fit, and recovered from it, he said abruptly, "I will be no longer flattered with the love of life;" and soon put an end to himself §. The other philosopher, discovering rather a dread of death, was often heard to say, "Nature, that has tied the bond of our constitution, will loose it." But, hearing that Antipater, the Stoic, had voluntarily taken poison, he appeared to be animated to a like resolution, and said to his servants, "Give me too." When asked what he would have, he replied, *a mixture of wine*.

The annunciation of Philo as a successor to Clitomachus, whom he had heard for several years, is understood by some to imply that of the erection of a fourth Academy **, although he himself is said not to have admitted the grounds of the division of the Middle, or the New, from the

* Sermo 80. pag. 473.

† Sextus Empiric. Advers. Mathem. lib. 2.

cap. 1.

‡ Cicer. Tusc. Quaest. lib. 3.

§ Stobaei Sermo 7.

pag. 90.

§ Diogen. Laert. lib. 4.

** Cicer. Academ. Quaest.

lib. 1. Ibid. lib. 4. Et Tusculan. Quaest. lib. 2.

the Old, and to have wrote some treatises in support of his sentiment. It appears from Cicero's account, that, in the dispute of the Academics with Zeno, he refused obstinately to make the concession in favour of that Philosopher's definition of a true *Visum*, to which others of Carneades's School had acceded, and, on that account, to have incurred both disadvantage in argument, and reproach. Amidst the public confusions that spread over Greece during the Mithridatic war, he chose, with some principal men of the Athenian state, to make his retreat to Rome. There, not reprobating the Faculty of Rhetoric, as Clitomachus had done, he only made it his institution to teach its precepts at one time, and those of philosophy at another †. His lectures were heard by the Roman nobility with applause; and Cicero, diligently attending his philosophic ones, seems then first to have contracted a taste for the Academic ambiguity in disputation ‡. By Sextus Empiricus we are only told, that, as to any judgment of truth, by means of a *comprehensive phantasy*, such as the Stoics maintained, he thought all things might be held incomprehensible; but not so, if the nature of things themselves was considered. In what manner, then, were they to be rendered comprehensible? We are not informed, further than what Stobaeus delivers as the sum of his philosophy, in the Ethical part; which he conceived to admit of the most exact division, and best illustration, by comparing it to the office of a physician. With respect to such theory, it need only be observed, that, allowing there were some proprieties in the comparison, yet, in philosophy, more than in rhetoric, the common adage was to be remembered as a just one, *Omne simile claudicat*.

The fifth Academy, if it can be so called, was instituted by Antiochus, a native of Ascalon, and Philo's disciple: But his revolt from the Academic School gave him more fame than otherwise he would have acquired, and likewise exposed him to more obloquy. This apostasy was much arraigned, and, in a manner, resented by Cicero ||, who assigns, not upon sufficient evidence, selfish or dishonourable motives to it **: Yet

* Ibid. in Bruto. seu de Clarif. Orat. p. 242.

cap. 33.

† Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 24.

** Cicer. de Legibus, lib. 1. p. 318.

‡ Pyrrh. Hypot. lib. 1.

|| Ibid. in init.

Yet Lucullus chose him for his Quaestor in Asia, and held him in great esteem; Atticus accounted him worthy of his friendship; and Cicero* himself acknowledged him to have been the most acute and best bred philosopher of his time. But the new profession he made in philosophy, appeared to the latter an objection to his character not to be removed; and, from its being so keenly urged as we see it in the Academic Questions, it is not presuming too much to say, that, if the Roman Orator was instigated by any particular motive, in framing these dialogues, beside the general one of the defence of his sect, it appears to have been that of indignation at Antiochus's behaviour, and a desire of combating those arguments he was known to have explained to Lucullus, and other learned Romans, in accounting for the change of his sentiments. Notwithstanding all his faculty in disputation, adds the Roman author, and the efforts made by him to prove, that the Stoics and Peripatetics did not disagree with the Old Academy, he appears to have had other inducements than those of reason, for acting the part he did; and, at any rate, it must be concluded, according to the received maxim, *that inconstancy depreciates authority*; such inconstancy, especially, as was manifest in him, who, in his advanced years, departed from what he had before so long maintained. But it is in Antiochus's favour, that he was a man†, as Lucullus attests, naturally of the mildest disposition; so that he was never seen by the Roman General to be once angry, or under the influence of passion, unless upon the occasion of Philo's two books being presented to him; in which he conceived himself to be most injuriously treated, and replied to the invectives in a piece, under the title of *Sofus*. Until then, it is acknowledged, that he had conducted the disputation with uncommon temper and moderation. How arbitrary and partial, then, may the construction be deemed, which imputes his renunciation of Carneades or Philo's School, that, rather *equivocally* than *directly*, admitted some probability of truth, and his espousing a philosophy that evinced the certainty of the principles of

* Acad. Quaest. ibid. p. 32.

† Homo natura lenissimus (nihil enim poterat illo fieri mitius); Acad. Quaest. ibid. p. 13.

of reason, not to rational persuasion, but to inconstancy of mind, or some other sinister and unjustifiable motives?

In support of the charge, the Roman Orator states it as an argument, that Antiochus was late in life before he found out any pretences in reason for such a retraction of his sentiments. But, surely, many instances there are, of men remaining long under the influence of an erroneous judgment without perceiving it; and, in Antiochus's case, the *fascination* of the dialectic arguments might long mislead his understanding. Trained up in the admiration of them, and obtaining applause for his own dexterity in their application, he might well be prevented from considering their fallacy; and, for a course of time, as little desire to renounce them, as apprehend how justly it might be done. But, at an age of more cool and unbiaſſed reflection, it would require no great effort of his judgment to be convinced of what Lucullus assumed as a principle in all human science, that some truths were to be held forth as self-evident; and, from these, the rational faculty made a progress to others unknown. If none*, such as the former, were acknowledged, neither would any of the other denomination be evinced, so as not to be liable to the objection of being doubtful and uncertain. Unless a concession was made, that there were axioms intuitively perspicuous, all *discursive* or logical ratiocination could be no more than a *periphery* of syllogisms, that rested on no recognised foundation of truth: And this may be said not only of any chain of moral arguments, but of the abstract theorems of geometry and mathematics. Although some of the moderate Academies were disposed to admit the perspicuity of the *postulata* of the latter sciences, yet the professed dialecticians and sceptics, like Sextus Empiricus, made no such exception, but considered them to be points disputable, and deserving as little credit as the maxims of the former. The disputations of the ancient Sceptic, upon this ground, have partly been gleaned by some of his modern imitators. But here we conclude the account of the Academies in affinity to Pyrrho.

The next subject to be taken up, in order of time, should be that of the Stoical Philosophy: But, as the difference between the period of

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Zeno's

* Acad. Quaest. ibid.

Zeno's flourishing and that of Epicurus, is inconsiderable, and the physical philosophy of the latter has been, in a great measure, anticipated in the exposition of Democritus's atomical system, adherence to the chronology may be so far dispensed with, and that philosophy first introduced, which has already had a large discussion.

P A R T

PART VIII.

SECTION I.

*Of Epicurus's Education, and manner of Life.—His institution of a Sect.—
The offence he gave to other Philosophers.—Fame of his School.—The
Unanimity and Celebrity of the Successors in it.*

A SMALL town in Attica, called Gargetium, gave birth to Epicurus. The family of his father, named Neocles, being connected with that of the *Philaidæ*, was ancient and noble, but in depressed circumstances *. The lot assigned to it, in the division of land in the isle of Samos, amongst two thousand citizens, was an insufficient support for a father and mother, with four sons that had not attained the age of puberty. Neocles, to obtain a subsistence for them, taught a school, while the mother, Chaerestrata, exercised her ingenuity upon the same account, in another way. Attended by her son Epicurus, in puerility, she went about chanting prayers in verse, for expelling spectres, or expiatory purposes, according to the vulgar credulity. Neocles, Chaeredomus, and Aristobulus, were Epicurus's three brothers, to whom, as Plutarch relates it †, the philosopher's affectionate care and benevolence were extended in a remarkable manner, and with so much efficacy, that

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their

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 10.

† De Amore Fraternali.

their mutual concord and unanimity might well be quoted among the signal examples of fraternal love.

The education Epicurus received, either at Samos or at Teos, was domestic, and under his father, until, at least, the eighteenth year of his age. He then appears to have visited Athens*, in the time of Xenocrates's regency of the Platonic Academy, and that of Theophrastus in the Lyceum. His stay, however, seems not to have exceeded four or five years, and to have been shortened, from the incident of Perdiccas's usurpation of the Athenian government, and the turbulence attending it after Alexander's death. He withdrew to Colophon, where his father now resided; and betaking himself, by turns, and as it was convenient, to a course of study, or to teaching a school, he spent some years in the latter occupation at Mitylene and Lampfacum. Authors agree that he came not to settle at Athens sooner than the thirty-sixth year of his age; which, as his birth ensued in the 109th Olympiad, corresponds to the 118th of that æra.

Amidst the number and celebrity of the Athenian schools, the appearance of a person in no repute, and rather in indigent circumstances, could not attract the public attention; and we have a testimony †, which may be reckoned unquestionable, that Epicurus lived at Athens with Metrodorus, Polyænus, and Hermachus, for a considerable time unknown in the city, and almost unheard of in Greece. Diogenes Laertius, indeed, says, that he conversed publicly for a while with other philosophers, and then, privately, instituted a sect called by his own name. At first, according to Plutarch ‡, he only professed himself a follower of Democritus in philosophy: But, whether known in public, or unknown for a space of time, or whatever distinctive title he took as a philosopher, it appears evident that his school, in its first institution, and even after he purchased, for eighty minæ, his famous garden, represented more a company of associates, who chose to live together as friends, and to hold discourses on philosophical subjects, and chiefly on that of turning life to the best account, in respect of its pleasures, than

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* Strabo, lib. 14.
Epicurus's Epistles to Polyænus.

† It is a citation, by Seneca, from one of Epicurus's Epistles to Polyænus.
‡ Adversus Colotem.

a college for literary study, and the instruction of disciples under a learned master of the sciences. To emerge from obscurity, and to collect disciples, the institutor of the new fraternity took all requisite pains. The inscription on the door of his garden gave a welcome to strangers*. He received the youth that came from Mitylene, and other parts of Asia, where he was known, with the kindness and facility of a friend, who wished to guide their early studies. He dispersed, amongst foreigners from all countries, treatises composed by him, on such topics of philosophy, as, beside being interesting in themselves, signified how much he differed from its other professors, both in stating the proper objects of it, and in his manner of treating them. The report of the concord and unanimity that reigned in the society being spread over Greece, numbers of students, under other masters, joined themselves to it; and Athens saw, in a course of time, a seminary of learning established, which had all the appearances of a well regulated and harmonious commonwealth.

The unexpected advancement of Epicurus's school into fame was the more offensive to the sects that prevailed in reputation, as a rival seemed to arise to them, who himself had no name in the fields of literature; who pushed not before him that of any celebrated instructor, and appeared rather to disdain the credit that might result to him from the claim of erudition†. Their indignation was excited against him as a despiser of learning; because, as they said, he had it not. His system of philosophy was arraigned as impious, and subversive of all morals; and aspersions of the grossest kind, upon the life he led, and the manners of his pupils, were retailed without proof, or any proper inquiry. Diogenes Laertius has given the catalogue, and the confutation, of these invectives, with the pen of a friend, and in the warmth of one who felt for the injustice done to the character of the philosopher he most admired. Certain, indeed, it appears to be, that Epicurus, neither from his constitution,

* Plutarch de Occulte Viventibus. Cicero de Finibus, lib. 2. pag. 64. Rumenius apud Eusebium, Praepar. Evangel. lib. 14. cap. 5. † De Naturae Deorum, Cicero, lib. 1. pag. 205. Sextus Empiricus Adversus Mathem. lib. 1. initio.

stitution, habit, or affectation of licentiousness, in diet, or the gratification of the senses, was addicted to the least excess; and that, on the contrary, he practised that temperance and sobriety, in his daily fare, recommended to his elevés, in a degree which few could imitate. While he drank only water, their allowance in wine was a spare one; and which it was a praise amongst them not to require. His temper, naturally placid, his humanity remarkable, and his conversation easy and agreeable, the influence of these qualities was apparently diffused through the society, in which the noise of disputation was not heard *, or petulance discovered; but, undivided in opinion, all its constituents adopted, and relished, the maxims of their philosophical guide. Their fortunes were not made, as amongst the Pythagoreans, a common stock for supporting the general expence; but, instead of distrusting the generosity of friends, it was deemed more decent to leave it free to every one to contribute in the proportion he thought fit.

Notwithstanding Epicurus showed himself prudent and mild in the management of his disciples, and had no disposition to take a part in the controversies of the different schools, yet, as he found himself obnoxious to most of them, and apprehended that the credit of his philosophy might suffer by their aspersions, he became morose and splenetic with respect to them, and expressed his censures of what he thought their defects, with asperity or derision. When they assigned him instructors in philosophy, at a conjecture, or according to their fancy, he was not contented with denying their assertions, but spoke scornfully of several of those that were named by them; and, if he used this freedom, as we are assured he did, with respect to various of them, his adversaries scrupled not to report his contumely to be directed against them all. In this way, at least, we may, most favourably for him, understand the amount of the charge, as it stands against him in various passages in Cicero †, and

* Themistius in Epist. 38.

† Cum Epicurus contumeliose Aristotelem vexarit; Phaedoni Socratico turpissime maledixerit; Metrodori sui fratrem Timocratem, quia nescio quid in philosophia dissentiret, totis voluminibus concideret; in Democritum ipsum, quem secutus est, fuerit ingratus, &c. De Natur. Deor. lib. 1. pag. 209.

and other authors, for affected, and often announced contempt of the philosophers of his time, and of many of those who preceded him. The accusation is not removed by Diogenes Laertius, but rather enforced, when he carries back Epicurus's scanty commendation of the philosophers to Anaxagoras and Archelaus of the Ionic school, and his studying the books of Democritus, and Metrodorus of Chios : For, although he might account their physical theories alone worthy of his approbation, he contradicted one of his first maxims, if he did not reckon the regulation of the human sentiments, upon a moral scheme, a more interesting object of science, and to which that of physics was considered by him as subservient. But, as these philosophers, whom he valued, had treated morals with little attention or accuracy, he must have been ill versed in the books of the eminent instructors in that branch of discipline, not to confess their excellence, or else averse to commend where much praise was certainly due.

Beside what may be ascribed to confidence in himself, Epicurus had grounds to presume that his attempt to raise a sect, connected with no other, and that pretended to borrow nothing from any known one, might be successful. The dissensions amongst the sects was a circumstance favourable to his hope. The marked deformity of some of them, such as the Cynics ; the formal gravity and austerity of others, such as the Platonists and Stoics ; the hard study generally prescribed by the distinguished ones ; and the intricate points of the dialectic to be learned by them all, while the Sceptics urged their arguments for endless doubt and debate ; were advantages which he had to reckon upon, when he entertained the thought of exalting the reputation of his philosophy above that of the most applauded among them. Sequestered for some time in his garden, and looked upon only as a philosopher who, with a company of friends, chose privacy and retirement, his frequent publications conveyed, at length, to the remotest corners of Greece, intelligence both of the novelty of his system, and the little difficulty there was in comprehending clearly all its principles. The report seemed to come forth with all the charm of a *Syren* song, from a quarter whence it was least expected to be heard. Philosophy was said there to smooth her contracted brow, to lay aside her cumbersome and useless attire, and

and to engage men to follow her precepts, as nature herself had dictated them ; and, without constraint upon her desires, and without notions, imposed under the name of wisdom, to lead them on to the knowledge of physical and moral truths, in such a manner that pleasure, the only ultimate good, would be found the result of the perception of both. A philosophy of easy discussion was not, indeed, much in the taste of the Greeks : They were naturally inclined to loquacity, and the love of disputation ; and, as we may well understand, from the variations and multiplicity of their theories that have been traced, they chose more the exercise and straining of their invention, than any pause or check of their disquisitive faculties : Yet this ardour of their genius, long exerted, had begun to abate. The times, too, conspired to relax their tone in philosophising, as well as in other exertions ; and, when a discovery was alledged to be made, of an easier and more direct way to the attainment of all requisite knowledge, men readily believed what they wished. The dry and disgusting study of the dialectic, the unbounded stretches of reason and imagination, the theoretical views and practical pursuits of a perfection in virtue, which surpassed the human conceptions and powers, were accounted unnecessary or chimerical. Rejecting all these courses, it was visible, and proved, by the contentment, the unanimity, and cordiality that prevailed among the disciples of the Garden, that men of contemplation might be sufficiently intelligent and happy. Such were the motives that determined many disciples of the other sects to become converts to Epicurus ; and, what was yet a more remarkable circumstance, the change was accompanied with the most entire submission of their opinions to the dictates of their new master. In the other Schools, there was commonly some point that was controverted, and which occasioned dissension among the disciples ; but, in that of Epicurus, all contest seemed to be excluded. In the principles of his system, the Platonist, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and even the disputatious and discontented Academic found each his *quietus* : So much was it verified, that, to operate conviction, there goes often something more than sheer argument. From the days of Pythagoras, no philosopher had obtained from his followers an equal acquiescence in his tenets ;
the

the ethical parts * of which were, therefore, comprised by him a book of *short sentences*, or *maxims most approved*, and that were learned by them, and committed to memory, like so many oracles. Not only while Epicurus lived, but long after his death, it was the boast of his sect, that there was no disagreement or altercation known amongst them.

If it be the excellence and recommendation of philosophy, that it holds forth doctrines, not only rational and just in contemplation, but such as are salutary and beneficial to particular men, and to societies; the systems of it that have most a tendency to those ends, and are the least liable to be perverted, appear to challenge, and to merit a preference: But that of Epicurus was, in this estimate, exceptionable, not to say unintelligible, and faulty, as it announced *pleasure* to be the supreme, and the highest of all *expetible goods*. Hardly any word, from its ambiguity, required more to be defined, and to have its meaning guarded against misconstruction, than the term *pleasure*; especially when it was used, in a most important sense, by a philosopher, who meant to express by it the ground and foundation of a moral scheme; or to point out what that special movement was, which, in the corporeal and mental affections of man, was to be regarded not only as the most predominant one, but also as the great principle by which the action or inaction of all the others was to be determined †. Epicurus avoided definitions, and pronounced them, generally, to be unnecessary. We shall, afterwards, see how indifferently he acquitted himself in explaining his conception of pleasure, and distinguishing it from that of the Cyrenaic philosophers.

It was not, therefore, without ground, that the Stoics, and other sects, took the alarm, and exclaimed against Epicurus's philosophy, as equally

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corrupt

* In alio, vero, libro, ubi, breviter comprehensis gravissimis sententiis, quasi *oracula* edidisse sapientiae dicitur, scribit his verbis; quae nota tibi profecto, Torquate, sunt; quis enim vestrum, non edidit Epecuri *κρυπτα δόξας*, id est, maxime ratas?—*Cicer. de Finib. lib. 2. p. 54.*

† Jam in altera philosophiae parte, quae est quaerendi et differendi; iste vester, plane, ut mihi videtur, inormis et nudus est; tollit definitiones, nihil de dividendo, ac partiendo docet, &c.—*Cic. de Fin. lib. 1. p. 42.*

corrupt with that of Aristippus, or of a similar tendency. However it might be explained and qualified by glosses, the abuse of his theory was most likely to prevail, and might pave the way to the total depravation of the Grecian manners. The lessons learned in the schools of Greece, with respect to virtue, and the motives to it, were not, as in other countries, a matter chiefly of private concern: They were preparatory to, or went along with, the discipline of a more public kind; which was that of the *gymnastic* exercises; instituted in the several republics, and enjoined to all their free citizens, at a certain age, to qualify them for military service. The youth were early trained, and incited to excel in these exertions of their manly vigour, and to court the toil and labour attending them, from the prospect of honour and fame resulting to themselves, together with an increased power of defence to the state. With this discipline, the recommendation of ease and indolence, and the study to attain the most pleasant sensations of body and mind, according to Epicurus's principles, were incompatible, and deserved, in any shape, to be discredited, rather than approved.

To respect the institutions or policy of his own, or any other country, is not, it may be said, the business of a speculative philosopher; who acknowledges no other guides, in his theories, but nature and reason; and Epicurus's purpose was to show what might be reckoned the end of human life, in general; to which, as their main object, men's actions were to have a constant reference. But, if the supreme good, held forth by him, was of a complex kind, participating as much of the bodily, as of the mental pleasures, and virtue, instead of being regarded as, in itself, a sufficient cause of happiness, was supposed only to co-operate to it in a certain degree; it would appear that his scheme of man's life would be an ambiguous one, and leave loose, and undetermined, which of two objects should be preferred, and upon what motives its actions were principally to proceed. How far Epicurus's reasoning removed this apparent ambiguity in his moral principles, and reduced them to consistency, may be apprehended from the exposition of them, subsequently to be given.

It is Seneca's remark, who, although a Stoic, makes many encomiums on Epicurus's virtues, that, if the school of the latter produced
great

great men *, it was to be ascribed to the imitation of his sober and temperate life, by his disciples, more than to his doctrine. He observes, how pervertible into a vitious meaning his general principles were; notwithstanding it was his avowed maxim, that *pleasure was inseparable from virtue* †. In regard to Epicurus's manners, and what was to be learned from them, his followers were left in no dubiety. The life he led, as to the gratification of the senses, was not only abstemious, but what any other person, except a philosopher, who placed his pleasure in his studies, and the fame that might thence redound to him, would have accounted a painful one ‡. "Truly," says Seneca, "I cannot think otherwise of his supreme pleasure, than as being something too sober and dry." He means, his resolving felicity into the absence of pain, and the possession of tranquility. Yet this might be the highest enjoyment to one who had an infirm constitution, and suffered often acute pains, from the fixed distemper of the stone; under the violence of which he ended his life. While in the severest distress, for fourteen days ||, he spoke and wrote of the counterpoise to it, which the recollection of his performances in philosophy afforded. The appointments in his *Will*, which Diogenes Laertius has recorded at large §, testified with what hope, and even a degree of assurance, he looked forward to the continuance and enlargement of the renown he had acquired. His Garden was assigned over to Hermachus, destined his immediate successor in teaching philosophy, and to such as he should nominate to the same charge; and, after these, to the professors of his doctrine in perpetuity. His birth day, as solemnised in his life time, was to have, always an annual celebration; and, every month, a day of festivity was

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to

* Epicuri non schola, sed contubernium magnos homines fecit; Sen. oct. edit. tom. 1. pag. 212.

† Audit, enim, voluptatem a virtute separari non posse; deinde, vitiis suis sapientiam inscribit, et abscondenda profitetur. Ita non ab Epicuro impulsi luxuriantur, sed vitiis dediti, &c.

‡ Nec aestimatur voluntas illa Epicuri (ita enim, Mehercules sentio) quam sobria et sicca sit; ibid. tom. 2. pag. 270.

|| Cicer. Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 5. pag. 190.

§ In Vita, ibid.

to be held to his and Metrodorus's memory, another to that of his brethren, and a third to Polyænus.

The frequency of these festivals, without saying any thing of the vanity of them, rather supererogated upon the customs of the Greeks *; and, if they served the end of their destination, to promote, together with a veneration for Epicurus, the fellowship and harmony of his sect, they also contributed to the abuses committed by its *voluptuaries*; some of whom were banished from Rome †, and others noted by Cicero as worthy of like punishment. Epicurus's death coincided with the second year of the 127th Olympiad, and in the completion of the seventy-first of his age; a period which Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, is reckoned to have survived, from his longevity. He obtained a punctual conformity to his testamentary requests, by his friends and disciples; and, along with public honours to his memory, the houses of his followers were generally adorned with his picture ‡; which they also engraved upon their cups and rings. The succession of his school is said to have been continued, without interruption, under fourteen masters, till near the Augustan age; and, for a course of time after that æra, to have had celebrity. How constant his application to study and composition was, may be estimated from the numerous treatises he published, amounting, according to Laertius, to three hundred volumes; when those only were reckoned, in which no citation from any author was to be found. Of all his voluminous works, there remain no more than three epistles; one to Herodotus, of *Natural Things*; a second to Pythocles, of *Meteors*, or things celestial; and another to Menaæceus, of *Morals*; and a few lines sent by him, when dying, to his friends Idomeneus and Hermachus. The stile is plain and simple, and such as he thought should ever be adopted in philosophical subjects, for the sake of perspicuity, and to avoid all obscure expressions. It was much censured, however ||; and, by Aristophanes, the grammarian, pronounced not elegant

* Cicero animadverts upon their institution as unbecoming a philosopher.

† Ælian, lib. 9. Cicero in Orat. pro Mar. Caelia; et in Orat. post redit in Senatum.

‡ Cicero de Finib. lib. 5. p. 98.

|| Sextus Empir.

Advers. Mathem. lib. 1. init.

elegant only, but too mean and vulgar to be used in any work of erudition.

Particular mention should now be made of Epicurus's chief associates in philosophy; of whom Metrodorus, a Lampfacene, is held to be first in reputation for ingenuity, and called by Cicero almost a second Epicurus, and, at least, his colleague in wisdom. The titles of several of his works are mentioned by Laertius; and the value Epicurus set upon his character, marked as it was with singular magnanimity, under much bodily indisposition. "I know all the avenues *," said he, "of Fortune, by which she can assault me; I have shut them up; and she is unable to reach me with her noxious breath." We omit rehearsing the story of his brother, Timocrates, who quitted Epicurus's school, with reflections on its discipline; and which raised a dust of scandal, that, in the authors who retail it, makes no more than a piece of obscure, and unprofitable reading. Metrodorus would have undoubtedly been named successor to the school, by Epicurus's suffrage, had he not died before him. Hermachus, therefore, attained the appointment, who distinguished himself by several publications. Polyænus may be reckoned the next in reputation; who joined to his other knowledge that of Mathematics. Epicurus's servant, Mus, whom he liberated, had also such a share of genius as to be ranked amongst the philosophers, who rose into fame from a servile condition. But those who lived under Epicurus, and others of his sect, attempted no more in philosophy, than to copy strictly the tenets prescribed to them. It was, as Numenius observed †, even accounted, amongst them, an impiety to do otherwise. Whatever any of them wrote was considered to be learned from him ‡, either directly, or by the help of his *auspicious* principles of science. So inclined to admire, and be delighted with his compositions, were the generality of his followers, that it is probable, no Grecian author tried, in prose or verse,

such

* Cicero. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 5. pag. 181.
Evan. lib. 14.

† Apud Euseb. Præpar.

‡ Apud eos, quicquid diceret Hermachus, quicquid Metrodorus, ad *unum* referretur; omnia quæ quisquam in illo contubernio locutus esset, unius ductu, et auspiciis dicta viderentur. Seneca in Epist. 33.

such an illustration of his system as Lucretius produced, in his ingenious and elaborate poem. Epicurus may, perhaps, be reckoned as much indebted to Gassendi for the vindication of his character *, and the revival of his fame, in modern times, as to any one who anciently undertook the task; when the facts to be proved were recent, and the testimonies to them less liable to be controverted. But we come, in the next section, to the introductory part of Epicurus's philosophy.

S E C T.

* Gassendus, de Vita et Moribus Epicuri.

SECTION II.

Introduction to Epicurus's Dialectic.—His Cononics, or Short Rules of Logic.—Examples of his Argumentation.—Estimate of his Reduced form of the Dialectic.

THE end of human life is, to live happily; and philosophy is that exercise of the speculative mind which enables us, without erring, to discover, attain, and enjoy *, the greatest felicity in body and mind. Other studies, that are foreign to this true wisdom of life, may be left to idle men to pursue; but nature and reason equally engage, and persuade us to turn our thoughts to it, as our chief object. Laudable and beneficial, alike, it may be accounted, in every age and condition of humanity †; to the young and the old, to the wealthy and the indigent. As it constitutes the well being of each of these situations of life, it becomes youth to learn early its precepts, and mature years not to forget them.

* Diogen. Laert. in Epist. ad Menaecum. Sextus Empiric. Adversus Mathem. lib. 10. pag. 466.

† The sentiment of Horace, in the following verses, may be thought to be borrowed from the Ethics of a sounder philosophy than that of Epicurus; yet, it must be owned to be exactly copied from his doctrine, expressed in the text:

Sic mihi tarda fluunt, ingrataque tempora, quae spem,
Consiliumque morantur agendi gnaviter, id, quod
Æque pauperibus prodest, locupletibus aequè;
Æque neglectum pueris, senibusque nocebit.—Hor. Epist. 1. lib. 1.

them. No one can be instructed too soon in what pertains to the rectification of his mind; or pretend, that the season for it is either not yet arrived, or is past; unless he be of opinion, that the convenient time of his doing well, and being happy, falls also under one or other of these predicaments. But, to that philosophy which is the proper study of man, he who is young will be easily encouraged, by the sensible good it procures him, and also, to persist in that course of life proved to be advantageous; and the person in age will find his wonted ideas, on the most interesting subjects, recur, with an influence strongly felt, from their early and continued impressions: For, it is the peculiar excellence of philosophy to communicate principles that cure the mind of anxiety, and banish the vain apprehensions of futurity, which otherwise, in declining years, are apt to invade it. Happy, then, are those to be accounted, who, from a fortunate temperature of body and mind, are disposed, of themselves, to cultivate the study of philosophy; or, being the natives of a country where proper instructions in it may be found, are induced to learn its important lessons; which, along with the wisdom of them, render men the masters of their sentiments and affections.

In entering upon the study of philosophy, or treating, scientifically, any of its parts, nothing ought to be more avoided, than either the admission of any tenet upon frivolous grounds*, or supporting an opinion by fables; such as are invented by the poets. A philosopher should himself feign nothing, nor retail, in his works, the fictions of others. As he professes to search after truth, his investigation of it should be carried on in a plain manner, without deviating into the fields of fancy, and placing what are only his own imaginations, or those of others, on a level with the discoveries of truth†. In this respect, that philosopher is not to be excused, who introduces into his account of the celestial spheres,

* Plutarch. de Audiendis Poetis.

† Epicurus here censures Plato, who, in the tenth book of his Republic, a work not strictly philosophical, but confessedly of a mixed kind, and decorated with some *allegories*, and traditional narratives, inserts the story, and the visionary scenes, alluded to in the text. We find, in other parts of his works, a reserve used, and even a discredit given to such poetical or traditional fictions.

spheres, and the different fates ordained for souls, either first entering into bodies, or here departing from them, the fabulous story of *Hercules Armenius's* resurrection from the dead, and the report of his *visions* in these inexorable regions; neither is Socrates's ironical manner of argumentation to be approved, and such pretended ignorance made use of by philosophers, as he thought allowable in his reasonings with the Sophists *. In a proper judgment, rhetoric, and even grammar, as arts that may be abused, are not to attain, in philosophical discourses, more estimation than is due to perspicuity of expression in the one, and the concordance of words in the other. Instead of giving indulgence to *hyperboles* in any panegyrical work, or poetical ornaments in plain doctrine or narrative, the man of wisdom knows what restrictions are to be prescribed to these compositions that too readily and improperly take the poet's strain, or the rhetorician's extravagant flourishes.

All philosophy is reducible to two parts, Physics and Ethics; of which the latter has so much universality †, that it may be reckoned, in a certain sense, comprehensive of the other; since, its object being the attainment of a happy life, the study of *physiology* is rendered considerable, only as what may be found conducive to that end. Were we not disturbed with apprehensions about the natural phenomena around us, and especially by the sight of those objects which appear to us to have an awful sublimity; had we not our fears of death, as something of the most interesting consequence; or, did we not form conjectures about the unknown ends of our desires, and by what means the griefs resulting from them may be mitigated; there would be little or no occasion to make physics, or the explanations of natural things, a special study: But, apt to be impressed, as we are, with such fears, and which, altho' unreal and vain, like those conceived by children in the dark, yet, upon uncultivated minds, produce their disagreeable effects, it becomes neces-

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* The stricture upon Socrates is not approved, but the propriety of his *irony* acknowledged, by Atticus, although an Epicurean, in the Dialogue of Cicero, de Claris Oratoribus, in the following terms: "Decet hoc, nescio quomodo, illum *Socratem*, nec Epicuro, qui id reprehendit, assentior."

† Diogenes Laert. *ibid.*

fary to turn our attention to the *nature of things*, so closely, that reflection and reason may enable us to emancipate ourselves from them.

A third part of philosophy, called the *dialectic*, notwithstanding the ostentation made of it in the schools *, is not to be assumed into use; since it has been found, in its pretensions to crush the *briars* of ratiocination, to have cherished the growth of a new species, and interlarded argument with cavils, or the empty sounds of loquacity. It is sufficient, for the purposes of reasoning, to know and to follow, as the *physiologists* generally do, the usage of clear and customary expressions. In forming a *canonic*, or general directory of reasoning, it is necessary to consider *truth* in two views; either as it is so *in fact*, or in the nature of things, or else, as the conceptions and notions of our minds are correspondent to this *actual* state of them. The former may be called the truth of *existence*; and the latter that of *judgment*. Into these two are resolvable all the objects of our knowledge; and the criterion of its truth is no otherwise to be discovered, than by attending to the several instruments and modes of our perceptions of objects. In perceiving things external, there is, first, to be considered the organ of sense, which presents the object to the mind; and, secondly, the internal sensation, or affection produced by it. Both these come under one denomination, that of a particular species of *sense*. Whether the perception be of an object immediately present, or of one recollected, and out of the reach of the senses, the mind does no more than contemplate a corporeal impression; which, in the second case, is distinguished by the name of the *phantasia*, or imagination. But the mental faculty goes further; even to the act of reasoning; so that a perception being again and again surveyed by it, a distinctive notion of the thing perceived is formed in the mind, and adopted, by way of *anticipation*, for a rule of judgment, or general *idea* of that *class*, or special kind of our perceptions. With respect, however, to the appetites of sense, or the affections and passions of the mind, no such judgment of reason intervenes. That which is attractive to us, as pleasure, and that which causes aversion, as pain, is subjected to

* Sextus Empiricus Advers. Logicos, lib. 7. pag. 139. et sequent. Some reckon-
ed, that Epicurus only rejected the verbal logic of the Stoics.

to no rational examination. The one and the other is felt, without the exercise of judgment; neither can the mind, by any operation or discussion, vary, in the least, the contrary, and inconvertible impressions made by them. The *criteria*, upon which our faculty of judgment proceeds, may therefore, according to this account of the modes of our perception, be reckoned three. The organ of sense, or the sensation arising from it, considered as one; the *anticipated* notion, or *idea* of the thing perceived; and the affection, or passion communicated from the object, to the mind.

Against those who maintain, that, in the senses, or the sensations produced by them, there is no evidence of truth, several obvious and just arguments may be used *. All sense, barely, apprehends and receives impressions of objects, without being capable of altering their appearances, or reasoning with respect to them. In the function of the senses, there is no exertion of the judgment, or rational faculty. They only announce what exists; and leave to the mind the notion or conception of *what it is*. Whatever it be, its existence, as an object, is incontestible; and against its reality there can be no appeal, either from one of the senses to another, when each of them is of equal credit, or to reason, the operation of which must have its ground in the perceptions of sense; and these must be held to be true; or all ratiocination with respect to them must be fallacious. The senses, therefore, and the imagination, must be reckoned to afford the same evidence of truth, in whatever they represent to the mind, as is universally allowed to the primary affections of pleasure and pain. If, in these, there be no deception, so neither is there any in the other, but what is corrigible, and can be rectified by the senses themselves, when adjusted, and duly placed to observe their objects †. How there should be a difference in

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* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* Sextus Empir. *Advers. Mathem.* lib. 7. p. 176.

† The doctrine of the credit due to the external senses, here maintained, is no more than what was asserted by the Peripatetics and Stoics; and the arguments of the latter, in supporting it, are almost the same with those used by Epicurus. Non enim is sum (says Lucullus) qui quicquid videtur, tale dicam esse, quale videatur. —Meo autem judicio ita est maxima in sensibus veritas, si et sani sunt et valentes, et omnia remouentur quae obstant et impediunt. Cic. *Acad. Quaest.* lib. 4.

the appearance of the bulks, figures, and colours, of the same objects, when seen near, or at a greater distance, or in varied positions, and that sounds, in like manner, should be differently perceived, is, from obvious reasons, intelligible, and can occasion only a temporary error: But in neither case, is the report of the senses a false one. He who, at a distant view, sees a tower to be small and round, which, as he draws nearer to it, appears large and square, has not an erroneous vision, but a true one, and such as it ought to be, from the different impression made on the organ of sight; which, justly, receives the one presented to it, and not another, that, upon a change of place, it may as properly admit. All the impressions of the senses, and the phantasia, are, therefore, realities, as much as our feelings of pleasure and pain; and, as the former cannot be moved by nothing, they must be deemed, no less than the latter, to have their causes in nature, and such efficient causes of their existence, that their forms and appearances cannot be any other, or different from those which they are actually, and at the time, perceived to be.

Yet, notwithstanding all affections of the imagination may be thus evinced to be true, the opinions we form of them may make such a difference, that some of them must be false, and others true. Opinion is something superadded to sense. It is a judgment which observation, or experience enables us to make about what is exhibited by the senses; and, being fallible, it may either be just or defective, founded in truth, or erroneous. We ought, therefore, to dissent alike from two classes of philosophers, those who would persuade us to doubt of all things, and others, who presume that every thing may be certainly known by us. There are, surely, several phenomena in nature that may be accomplished various ways; as in the cases of the rising and setting of the stars, the eclipses of the celestial bodies, and other meteors. To assert that they can be performed in no way but in one, is an absurdity. Yet there are some maxims in physics which a wise man will not hesitate to adopt as invariably true; such as that *out of nothing, nothing is made*; the *universe consists of body and vacuum*; the principles of things are indivisible; and

* Sext. Empir. *ibid.*

and others of a like kind *. Since, to discredit the senses as fallacious overthrows all reasoning, and to hold every opinion, or judgment formed upon their report, to be true, confounds the several degrees of evidence they are capable of affording, these two short rules or *canons*, taken together with what has been already observed, may be considered as *criteria* of truth or falsehood, so far as the judgment of either depends upon the testimony of the senses †. *That opinion is true, which is attested, or not contradicted, by the evidence of sense; and that opinion is false, to which the contrary predicaments are applicable.* By the first of these, any perception, or appearance of an object, is understood to be *then* duly attested, when the circumstances requisite to a proper judgment of it are attended to; such as the distance at which it is placed, its being in motion, or at rest, the medium through which it is beheld, and the sound disposition of the organ, or organs of sense that take cognizance of it; and in case of a discoverable obstruction, from any of these accedents, to its being adequately perceived, that it be removed, or its effect remedied. Therefore, to the question, *Is a thing such as it appears to be?* The answer ought not to be immediately given, but rather deferred until an opportunity be taken, by all suitable methods, to obviate, or rectify what may be found conducive to the fallacious appearance of objects. What is meant by an opinion not being contradicted by the evidence of sense, will be best explained in connection with what is now to be said upon *anticipation*; which will also comprehend the import of the other canon.

Anticipation, or preconception, is such a notion of an object which the senses have presented ‡, and the mind has attentively considered, as affords a fixed conception of it; so that, whether again beheld, or recalled to memory, we apprehend it to be that identical thing, and not another, and to have a form and appearance that distinguishes it from any other. Thus, after observing the figure and aspect of a particular man, the mind sets apart, as it were, that marked perception, and anticipates

* *Judicio rerum in sensibus ponit (Epicurus) quibus, si semel aliquid falsi pro vero probatum sit, sublatum esse omne judicium veri et falsi putat. Cicer. de finibus, lib. 1.*

† Sextus Empiricus, *ibid.* lib. 7. p. 177.

‡ Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

cipates as a thing known and comprehended by it, any subsequent exhibition of his image to the senses or imagination; and not only does this internal pre-conception communicate the intelligence of the distinction of singular objects, but, by the mind's notice of a difference common to many of them, universal conception, including several species under one idea, is derived; and we as readily understand and pronounce such an animated form to be human, or that of *man*, generally conceived, as we recognise *this* object of the senses, to be Socrates, and *that* *, Plato. Without an anticipated notion in the mind, by means of which some inference may be made, we could not inquire, doubt, or reason about any thing. We could not even give a name to any perception of the senses, or understand the meaning of its picture in the imagination. Anticipation, therefore, is, in a manner, the *defining* of a thing to us, and the *exordium* and principle of all rational discourse. It presents to the mind something *first* evident, before, in annunciation, or reasoning, any conclusion can follow. To prove that a man, and not another object, is beheld by us, we must antecedently have a certain conception of his form; otherwise we cannot pronounce what it is we see; and so every proof and demonstration must have for its basis a conception that is manifest, and about which we do not reason, but use it as the necessary step to ratiocination, or the unfolding of something not perspicuous. In this process, the scrupulous forms insisted on by the Dialecticians, are not requisite to be observed; nor need we study, as they do, artificial modes of reasoning and argument, as if all things were to be demonstrated by them. If the anticipations, or what, in argumentation, are called the premises, be distinct and clear, as they ought to be, the conclusions of reason will be sufficiently evident, although not scanned by their elaborate rules.

That demonstration consists in evincing, or bringing to light that which is unmanifest, from the assumption of a thing manifest, may be exemplified in the proof that there is a vacuum in nature. The existence of a thing not evident is here to be proved †. We assume, for the desiderated

* Sextus Empiric. lib. 10. p. 442.

† Ibid. Sextus, advers. Logicos, lib. 7. p. 176. et ibid p. 280.

desiderated evidence, a thing attested by the senses, which is motion; and say, if there be motion, there is a vacuum, but there is motion; therefore there is a vacuum: Or the argument may be more explicitly thus stated: If there be not a vacuum, neither is there motion; for motion is inconsistent with an universal plenum; but it consists with, and requires a vacuum; therefore the latter must exist. Here it is to be observed, that in the first form of the argument, the attestation, and *non-contradiction* of the evidence of sense are the criteria, upon which we infer the existence of a thing called in question. The senses testify that there is motion, and they do not contradict the supposition of a vacuum. Clear and unambiguous premises are therefore held forth; and one of them, which is a sensible perception, is assumed as the *medium*, or probable reason of the conclusion, or that the existence of a vacuum is true. In the other form, the contradiction of the senses, and the want of their evidence are made the rules of judging and determining the existence of a thing to be false. It is not testified by the senses, that there is no vacuum; and what is more, the opposite supposition of a plenum contradicts their perception of motion, which consists not with it; and so, to prove a plenum we must remove, or hold as a non-entity a thing only not manifest, and also subvert that which has the clearest evidence of its truth: Any opinion supported by such argumentation carries along with it, a sufficient proof of its falsehood. In reasoning, the *medium* used ought properly to be a thing perceived by the senses; but, in many cases, it may not have any necessary connection with what is inferred. When the vast infinity of nature is considered, we must understand what is called the rule* of *equivalence* to hold, that is, if of two contraries, one exist, the other must be allowed to *be*. Hence is framed this argument, If the multitude of mortals be so great, that of immortals can be reckoned no less such; and if things that destroy be numberless, those which preserve must also be infinite. We mention not here the several ways the conceived idea of a thing may be excited, and converted in
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* Summa, vero, vis infinitatis, ac diligenti contemplatione dignissima est; eam esse naturam, ut omnia omnibus, paribus paria respondeant. Velleius Epicureus in Cicerone, De Natura Deorum, lib. 1. p. 203.

the imagination; as the account to be given in the Stoical Philosophy of this process is quite similar to that of Epicurus; and we shall find some other of Zeno's speculations upon the subject of ideas to correspond with it. In concluding the article of anticipation, as it relates to reasoning, it deserves notice in what manner Epicurus, to the * surprise of the Dialecticians, foiled their most approved and fundamental maxim in argumentation; that, in a disjunctive proposition, the subject of which is a future contingency, one of its contraries, either its affirmation or negation must be necessarily true; as when it is pronounced that Hermachus will either live, or he will die to morrow. It is, said Epicurus, not an incontestible proposition; for, if either of its disjoined parts be taken separately, it contains no certainty of what is to be; and, taken together, they can never prove that there is a necessity in nature, that Hermachus shall live, or shall die on any assigned day. Cicero, touching upon this argument, alledges, as an academic disputant, in one passage †, that it appears to subvert all the dialectical reasoning of the Stoics; and, in another ‡, he quotes it as an instance of the ignorance or impudence of the Epicureans; who were not ashamed to assert, that an announced proposition might be neither true nor false. In an assertion about the actual *being* or not *being* of a thing, the one, or the other, of these contrary predicaments must be applied, unless entity and non-entity be confounded. But with respect to the future and contingent existence of an event, the mind can only conceive its possibility or impossibility, without being capable of judging certainly, whether it will ensue or not; and, therefore, the assertion can neither be affirmative or negative. Yet, in Logics, it may be properly asked, How that can be called an assertion, which does not affirm or deny any thing?

To the affection, or passion, communicated from the object to the mind, no other criterion of judgment is competent, but that which is taken

* Vide, says Cicero, quam sit cautus is, (Epicurus) quem isti tardum putant. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. p. 29.

† Ibid.

‡ O admirabilem licentiam, et miserabilem inscitiam differendi! si enim aliquid in eloquendo, nec verum, nec falsum est; certe id verum non est. Quod autem verum non est, qui potest non falsum esse; aut quod falsum non est, qui potest non verum esse. Cic. de Fato, p. 307.

taken from the affection, or passion itself, indicating a sense of pleasure or pain *; and of the one, a desire, and towards the other, an aversion. It is, because pleasure is pleasure, and pain is pain, that these two affections are to be regarded as, in themselves, the absolute motives to all liking or disliking of objects, either of sense, or the imagination. This will be explained more particularly in the *Ethics*. Here it may only be premised, that, since in life, pain as well as pleasure must be encountered, a wise man, in any voluntary admission of the former, or resignation of the latter, will look for, and endeavour to procure, a compensation to himself. How this will be best obtained, the following canons may be taken as a general directory. *He will embrace all pleasure, to which no pain is annexed: He will shun all pain, connected with no pleasure: Where pleasure hinders the access of a greater degree of it, or produces that of a greater pain, it will be avoided by him: In case a heavier pain can be removed, or an enlargement of pleasure be procured, by means of the former, it will be embraced by him.* The canons Epicurus added, respecting the use of words in discourse, being comprehended in what has been said of his recommendation of plain and unambiguous diction, require no particular rehearsal.

Such, then, was Epicurus's model of the dialectic; so contracted, indeed, and stripped of what he accounted its vain parade, and frivolous rules, that it was thought, in the schools, undeserving of the name of a theory of the art of ratiocination. It had, however, considerable merit; and was a well aimed and hardy blow at the scepticism of Pyrrho, and the Academics, and also a just reprobation of the dialectical perplexities. It was not a system of Logics; it was not a set of rules for confining argumentation to one tract; it did not pretend to give a demonstrative proof to those, who said they had not a notion of demonstration. While, without the books of Aristotle being published, his disciples endeavoured to bring all ratiocination to the syllogistic form †; and, while the Stoics, adverse to scepticism, in fact, promoted it, by dashing their logics with the most futile distinctions of ideas and words; Epicurus took

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* Diogen. Laert. ibid.
pag. 281.

† Sextus Empiricus, ibid. de Demonstratione,

the opportunity of condemning, and, in a great measure, shaking off these studied fetters of knowledge, and prescribed the criteria of true and false opinion, and, consequently, of just argument, that have been mentioned, and beyond which he thought it unnecessary to stretch the process of the Dialectic. It appears from Sextus Empiricus *, and other authors, that Democritus had his *Canons*, or rules of judging, betwixt a clear and obscure knowledge of things; which, from the hints of them given, nearly coincide with those of Epicurus. Originality, therefore, either in the name, or the import of what he called his *Canonic*s, cannot be ascribed to the latter. Their narrow compass and simplicity, without considering their evidence, reproached, or ridiculed the accumulated labours and controversies of the other schools in the theory of logics. Appendages, as they were, of his physical system, and helps to his moral one, their truth was liable to be scrutinised upon the principles of these sciences. Taken in connection with the one or the other, the *Canonic*s might gain, or lose credit, according as the theory of each appeared to be valid, or otherwise. Epicurus found not in them that release from disputation they were calculated to procure. Notwithstanding their barrier, he was dragged into controversy, about several of his tenets, or their consequences, upon the dialectical ground, embarrassed and fallacious as it was rendered by Zeno's subtile arguments, refined upon and improved by Chrysippus. His Atomical System, now to be brought forward, was not so much the subject of contention, as some principles of theology and morals involved in it, which led to other points of obscure and metaphysical discussion.

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* Ibid. page 164.

SECTION III.

Heads, or Summary of what is comprehended in the Science of Physics.—

Illusive argumentation about the All or Whole of things.—Variations of Epicurus's Atomical Theory from that of Democritus.—Imitations of his Stamina of Bodies, adopted by Modern Corporealists.—Physical Analysis of the Human Soul.—The Epicurean Divinities.—Apologies for his Theology by Modern Authors.—State of their arguments in his defence.—The question about the Origin of Natural and Moral Evil treated by them.

THE science of *Physics*, which may rather be denominated *Physiology*, has for its object the things of nature, and is explicable, by rational disquisitions, and discourse with respect to them *. For instruction to the minds, and aid to the memories, of those who would apply themselves to this speculation, without having intention, or leisure, to descend into all its particulars, it may be proper and useful to set before them a *compendium* of it, under several heads; whence may be understood its great extent, and the variety of discussions it includes. These heads are reducible to four; the *universe*, called also the *whole*, the *all*, or the *sum* of things; the *world*, or that portion of the universe visible to men; of which, as comprehending the circumference of the heavens, and the stars, there may be, in the nature of things, numberless other patterns. Next is to be reckoned the *earth*, and whatever it contains, placed in the middle or lower part of the world; and, lastly, those parts

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* Diogen. Laert.

of nature, which, in respect of the earth, have inferiority and sublimity, such as the air or atmosphere contiguous to it, and the superior region of *aether*, or fire.

Notwithstanding what Epicurus had so speciously premised, about the unbiaſſed ſtudy of philoſophy, and aſſuming no hypotheſis upon frivolous or traditional grounds, he could not, it ſeems, avoid advancing the old equivocal argument of the philoſophers, that the univerſe was infinite and immoveable. He ſupported the firſt poſition, by alledging that its extremity cannot be determined. Why? Be cauſe it comprehends within it all place of body, or ſpace, which renders it infinite. But how is it proved to be under that predicamentt? It is neceſſarily ſo, and cannot be otherwiſe, *becauſe* it is the *univerſe*. This was the illuſive and puerile argument, which many of the ancient philoſophers, both metaphyſical and phyſical, uſed in maintaining the infinity of what they called the Univerſe; when conſidered abſtractly, and without reference to any ſpecial conception of its nature, or ſubſtance. But exiſtence, in the abſtract, can have no one attribute applicable to it, more than another; and the univerſe, or world of being, muſt be imagined to be of a certain nature, before any thing can be affirmed or denied with reſpect to it. Yet the philoſophers, who found it eaſieſt to compile their ſyſtems metaphyſically, and by help of words reducible to no determined meaning or definition, avoided ſaying what they conceived the ſubſtance of the univerſe to be; and, therefore, readily inveſted it with whatever attributes they pleaſed. They pronounced it infinite, although human language could hardly find any name or appellative for it, but what was of a definite ſignification, and held forth a circumscribed idea: For ſuch, notwithstanding their generality, are the terms the *univerſe*, the *all*, the *whole*, or the *ſum* of things. They ſignify no more than a conception of ſomething ſo extended or immenſe, that, to it, no addition is to be made. The *infinity of things*, that neither denotes, in a phyſical or metaphyſical ſenſe, genus or ſpecies, or difference of condition, appears to be the only epithet expreſſive of the world's being infinite.

When the emphatic term, *whatever is*, came to be uſed, by the diſciples of the Pythagorean and Platonic ſchools, to ſignify the univerſe,

or *all* of things, it appeared grossly absurd to say, *whatever is, is infinite*; and, when the substance of the world was declared to be body, the application of the epithet was evidently incompetent; as a quantity infinite was inconceivable, and body could never be imagined of such extension, as to leave no room, or place beyond it. Empty space was therefore to be brought forward; or else the world could not, even in idea, have infinity ascribed to it. While some philosophers pronounced it to be nothing, or only an idea of the mind, it was admitted, in the theories of Democritus and Epicurus, to be not merely an *adjunct*, or accident to body, but an *ens* that subsisted by itself, of a species different from *corporiety*, and conceivable without any connection with magnitude. And thus, the two most distinguished materialists of antiquity could not hold forth their theory without assigning a real existence to space, absolutely requisite as it seemed to be, not for place of body only, but for its local motion. Being unsolid and penetrable, it had not the essential properties of body, which was defined by Epicurus to be, that which was tangible, and made resistance to any impression. Contemplated by itself, they were forced to reckon it a sort of *incorporeal*; a conception quite inconsistent with their scheme of the world. As those philosophers, who held the universe to be a *plenum*, were much perplexed about the movement of bodies in it; so it proved difficult to such of them as scepticised about *incorporeal* being, to dispose decently of space. They, generally, held it to be nothing more than an idea; upon the argument as old as Zeno Eleates; and of which, indeed, as has been mentioned, he was accounted the inventor. But, specious as it is, it must seem strange, if that, without which none of the great bodies in the universe could move, in the manner we now know many of them certainly do, is only to be reckoned a *non-entity*. But, in Epicurus's philosophy, it was assumed as a principle no less real than body itself; for, as has been observed in the dialectical part, if the one had the testimony of the senses for its existence; the other, although unmanifest to them, was proved by motion taking place; a thing equally perceptible to them. Of the two principles, *body*, and a *vacuum*, he maintained the universe to consist; and, between them, he asserted there was no other in the nature of things.

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As, according to the maxim commonly received among the philosophers, that, *out of nothing, there could come nothing*; the *all* of things could have no beginning; so, neither could mutability, or terminable existence, be assigned to it. The parts of which it was constituted being moveable, might undergo changes; but these, bearing no proportion to the immensity of the *whole*, could not affect its constant and perpetual duration. Yet, if all the parts, or any given divisions of them, were changeable, what power or virtue could be imagined in the whole to exempt it, in endless time, from mutation? To this it was replied, that matter was not infinitely divisible, as some philosophers alledged, who absurdly conceived that there could be infinite parts in a finite body. How much more reasonable was it to suppose, that its division terminated in its smallest imaginable particles; which, being the utmost sections of magnitude, may be called *atoms*. Their minute parts being incapable of separation, they might be reckoned infrangible. If, then, allowing a small difference in their magnitude, they should be accounted, although not infinite in their figures, yet, beyond comprehension, divers, as round, oval, straight, crooked, plain, cornered, angular, hooked, and of other shapes that have no name; they may, being infinite in number, and nearly so in their various kinds, be held the original stamina of bodies; and, by means of their motions in empty space, sufficient for the formation and contexture of all corporeal substances in the earth and in the heavens. After the full exposition given of the Atomical hypothesis, in the Physics of Democritus, we shall not now again insist upon the improprieties of the *postulata*, and its theoretical absurdities, further than bringing into view some of them, not particularised, and others of moral importance. Here it may be observed, in general, upon the hypothesis of the atoms existing eternally, that, since it was necessary to suppose that something always was, to avoid the inconceivable production of any thing from nothing, the obvious dictate of reason, in the contemplation of such an eternal principle, the cause of all other things, is that, to it, appertains absolute perfection. Necessary existence must involve this idea; for, so far as perfection is an intelligible attribute of being, it can be ascribed alone to that which ever was, of itself, one and the same being; and not to any thing contingent,
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generated in time, and, therefore, imperfect and mutable. That the generality of the ancient philosophers, with few exceptions, deviated from this rational idea, or never at all entertained it, is too apparent from the history of their theories of the world's generation; in which they introduced, as eternal principles, *chaos*, the confusion of all the elements, or such partitions of them as they pleased. The theorists, properly called Physical, thought themselves as well entitled to this liberty; and, therefore, considered it as the proper display of their ingenuity, to show how certain quantities of matter or body, such as Epicurus's atoms, described to be infrangible, and diversely figured, but destitute of all other properties, and having no connection of existence with one another, might both be, and act, as eternal principles, and generate worlds after worlds, fortuitously, and, often, in the regular and orderly forms of the heavens and the earth; ever beheld, by rational creatures, with admiration, and which assist, at least, if they do not excite, what Epicurus reckoned men's natural anticipations of deities, or divine powers, in the universe.

Having stated, arbitrarily, that the principles of bodies might be found in the sections of bodies, as if their division could be reduced to a fixed point, Epicurus's next speculation respected the motion of his atoms. Leucippus and Democritus had assigned to them a kind of inherent animation; but he, with the shew of more physical knowledge, represented them as having a tendency to motion, and actually moved, from their *gravity*. But how could this principle take place; when, according to what was admitted in his hypothesis, there was no *upwards* or *downwards* in the infinite void, or any conceivable point in the universe, to which they could gravitate? Instead, therefore, of any proof of their having weight, he substituted another *postulatum*; equivalent to begging the whole question about their motive power. It was necessary, he said, for the sake of the theory, to suppose an *upper* region, from which the atoms had been eternally descending, like drops of rain, in a perpendicular direction, and that with so much velocity, and uniformity of their motion, as to sweep down, in an instant of time, over any the greatest assignable space, when, in the *vacuum*, nothing obstructed their

their course *. But alledged to move thus, in parallel lines, the material point, of their coming into collision or contact with one another, was rendered impossible. To correct this error, he was obliged to feign the *clinamen* of the atoms, or their least possible declination from the straight line, without saying how they came by it, in direct contradiction to his assumed physical principle: Still, however, the forced supposition availed not to effectuate the concourse of the atoms; for, if the declination was general, and equal amongst them all, they could as little attain it in any bent direction as in a perpendicular one; and, if some of them took the one, and some the other, there was then a sort of different *office* doing among them; an absurdity sufficient to reprobate the whole theory. When joined, as it was, with the gross imagination, that the liberty of human actions depended upon the deflection of the atoms from the straight line, it must be owned, that no fiction of the poets could exceed it †. That an hypothesis, so replete with errors, underwent ridicule, as well as serious confutation, need not be surprising. Its credit, however, was still supported, in a considerable degree, by the investigators of the principles of bodies, in opposition to the doctrine of *occult* qualities; which taking its rise, chiefly, from the Aristotelian philosophy, appeared to throw an impenetrable cloud over physiology in the schools.

Hence the modern Atomists, in imitation of Democritus and Epicurus, continued to invent various theories, for proving the world a self-moving machine. By Descartes, the atoms were resolved into a *subtile matter*, which he supposed to be created by the Deity, with a quantum of motion impressed upon it, and constantly maintained by him ‡. Excluding

* De bent, nimirum, praecellere mobilitate
Et multo citius ferri, quam lumina solis,
Multiplexque loci spatium, transcurrere eodem,
Tempore; quo solis pervolgant fulgura coelum.—*Lucret. lib. 2.*

† ——— Ne res ipsa necessum,
Intestinum habeat cunctis in rebus agendis
Et devincta, quasi cogatur, ferre, patique
Id facit exiguum clinamen principiorum.—*Ibid.*

‡ Renat. Cartes. Princip. Philosophiae, Pars 3tia, Artic. 48.

cluding a vacuum in nature, he endeavoured to show, that, by his particles of matter propelling one another, circularly, certain *vortices* would be formed, having such action, that the spheres of the earth, and the heavens might be produced by them. His scheme of the world's constitution, in this manner, was applauded as surpassing, in ingenuity, every former corporeal theory. It was generally thought to be invincible by argument; when the more just knowledge of the laws of motion, in fluids, ascertained by experiments, and the demonstration of a vacuum, given in the Newtonian philosophy, subverted the credit of all his laboured proofs, and left his *vortices* without a *standing* in the operations of nature. There is ground for believing that Sir Isaac Newton conjectured, that the elements of all bodies may have been corpuscles, or atoms of matter, actually divided by the *first cause*; so that, from their hardness, the natural elements composed of them might be durable. This opinion of the incomparable geometrician and philosopher, amounts to no more than what we find expressed by him, with respect to a similar question, in a note upon the text of his optics, where he signifies, with modesty, his thought, or apprehension, that a subtile fluid might be the cause of the gravitation of bodies: So unpretentious, and diffident, was he, in assigning, positively, the primary, although subordinate, causes of the works and operations discernible in the world of God. Yet some geniuses there have been, and are, by whom Epicurus's theory of the origin of the world, or matter, some how or other, mysteriously agitated, is held satisfactory, and all that they desire to know, in a point, of all others the most important, and worthy the utmost attention of the human mind.

The next article to be exhibited, of Epicurus's physiology, should be that, in which he endeavours to assign the *stamina* of the human soul; which he resolves into four species of corpuscles, of exceeding tenuity; one *fiery*, another *aërial*, a third *flatuous*; and a fourth, to which no name could be given *, on account of its subtilty, or its efficacy being no fur-

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ther

* Quarta quoque his, igitur, quaedam natura necesse est,
 Attribuat, ea est omnino nomine expers,
 Qua neque mobilius quicquam nec tenuius extat.—*Ibid.*

ther explained, than by saying it caused the sensitive faculty in all animals. Its weight was computed to be no more in the bodily frame, than the spirit in wine; although its extension was equal to the whole capacity of the body. But, notwithstanding this contexture of parts, the soul was not completed, without having *intellect* or *mind* conjoined with it. Distinguished from the sensitive or animal soul by its faculty of perception, when moved by the senses, it thinks, understands, and performs all the functions of reason. It was reckoned to be void of affection and passion; or at least, to receive the impression of either in a way peculiar to itself. It was even supposed to have more of animal life than the sensitive soul; as it subsisted in the amputation of the limbs around it, when life in them departs with the extinction of the intellect. We need not farther unfold this complicated process of the atoms, in patching up the compound substance of the human soul; which required them to be refined, and sublimated, beyond all power of conception, before one glimpse of thought could be supposed to arise from their operation.

There is, however, some invention allowed to Epicurus, or rather Lucretius, in accounting for the action of external objects upon the human senses, and the perception of them by the soul composed of atoms; which, although no master-piece of ingenuity in physics, can hardly be omitted in the sketch of their theory. Observing that certain *effluvia*, as smoke, or vapour, issued from fire, water, and compositions of earth; it was thought by them a probable hypothesis to maintain, that thin images, or pellicles, (called by Lucretius *simulacra*, and *cortices*), were detached from all bodies, and made an incursion upon the senses, which were always ready to admit them. It was supposed that the atoms, however much combined, were ever in some struggle to disengage themselves, and that they would with more facility escape from the exterior than the internal parts of bodies, which yet they were seen to do; and being only contextures of simple atoms, that they might so escape, as to preserve the order and arrangement they had in the extremities of the bodies. Too aerial to be discerned by the eye, the *simulacra* were capable of shooting off incessantly, and also, of being constantly followed by others; while the medium of the air, through which they passed, would

would be little or no impediment to their celerity. By hard bodies, as wood, and stone, and others untransparent, they might be shivered, or broken in pieces; but, penetrating through all porous and pellucid ones, they would have a full influx upon the human organs of sense, and those of all animals. Carrying the various dyes of the bodies from whence they came, they would give the tincture of them to the visual organs, and so cause the perception of colours. A nice examination of this theory may be spared. There is but little occasion to put physical questions to expose its many fallacies. How we are to understand that the *effigiae*, or similar surfaces, were to be found in several continued, and entire folds in the bodies, or else, in the instant of their flight, get into their forms, and how the bodies themselves did not, from their constant fluxion, decrease, and vanish altogether, it is impossible to say. When objects are seen, sounds heard, smells perceived, all at the same time, is it credible that there should be no interference among the *simulacra*, or that their reception by the senses should be so easy and equal, as to produce no broken or disjointed impressions? The physical poet, after the greatest strains of his imagination upon these points, finds his task not half performed. Images were still wanting to correspond to those of the mind, which had no representations in nature. The visions in sleep, too, when the organs of sense are hardly accessible, demanded a particular explication. For such phenomena, he feigns a generation of floating images; one set of them spontaneously formed in the air, like the varying shapes of the clouds, and another engendered by the accidental rencounter of the different *simulacra* of real bodies; from the cohesion of which masses, the monstrous forms of giants, centaurs, and other chimeras, might be conceived to be produced. The fourth book of the *De Natura Rerum* is almost entirely taken up with resolving these appearances; while, by what means the pellicles find their way, unshivered, into the breast, the reputed seat of the soul, or how their impressions are retained, or repelled, recalled, or banished, at the will of the mind, are points either omitted, or what present difficulties unfurmountable by any physical solution. The figure Lucretius's genius makes in the attempt may indeed be a monitory, to the

most conceited of their physical science, how disadvantageously they would engage in the argument, upon similar grounds.

It appears that the corporealists considered Epicurus's analysis of the human soul as incautiously minute, and what ascribed so much to the intellectual part as to give it, singly, all the essential properties of an immaterial principle; although not capable of exerting them, but by means of the body, and its organs. It was not, therefore, generally acquiesced in; but Dicearchus's treatise upon the soul, as Cicero informs us, obtained superior reputation amongst the Epicureans and Academics. His tenet was, that, being material, it had no particular position, either in the brain or breast, or any one part of the body, but was equally diffused through its whole frame; so that it became sight in the eyes, hearing in the ears, smelling in the nostrils, tasting in the palate, and sensation in every part. All the ingenuity of this hypothetical argument may be said to consist in its being, as Socrates alleged some of Heraclitus's positions were, of the unintelligible kind. It supposes a species of matter, undescribed, but called *soul*, by means only of its extension in a body with organs, to be so diversified, as to acquire faculties utterly incompatible with any conceptions that can be formed of the action or powers of material particles, however modified or subtilized. It would confound the intelligent faculty with the corporeal organs; and, because the eye is said to see, the ear to hear, the body to feel, imply, that there resides in each of them a distinct perceptive faculty, of which, notwithstanding their fine organization, none of them are conscious, no more than the skin of the body knows that it has sensation. It assumes, that the individuality of perception, or that unity of thought which characterises an idea in the human mind, may be accounted for, from a material *percipient*, extended, or divided into parts. It contradicts the experience we have, that the intelligent faculty is not distributed; like animal sensation, through the body, but confined to a particular part. It can give no account of the soul's command over the body in all its exterior motions; which, without mentioning its other peculiar endowments of reflection, reason, and judgment, makes it presumable that the body is fitted up, organically, to be subservient to the agency of this superior principle; a power that is, accordingly,

cordingly, exercised by it, with understanding, will, and intention, in all its purposes.

Although the dissolution of the human soul at the death of the body was the natural consequence of Epicurus's theory of its composition, Lucretius has subjoined other arguments for its mortality, of the vulgar kind; which, however, may be supposed to operate more powerfully on common understandings, than such as are strictly philosophical, or moral. The imbecillity of the mind, in the immature age of the body, its seeming advancement in vigour, along with the corporeal frame; its various affections, from the indisposition, or soundness of the bodily organs, and the gradual decline of its powers upon the accumulation of years; are urged as incontestible evidences of its material and dissoluble composition. That the soul, connected with, and under fixed laws of union with the body, should be affected with the state of its associate, and be in a constant degree of sympathy with it, is surely nothing more than what was, in every view of such a combination, to be expected; nor is it conceivable how it should be otherwise; not only in respect of the changeful frame of the body, but the limited operation of the immaterial principle. Its perceptions, so far as they respect external objects, are, as we experience, confined to a particular place of recognition, from impressions made on a material *sensorium*, and therefore liable to be disturbed by accidents to the bodily organs. There are no other avenues, by which the mind can be approached, but by the motions excited in the senses; nor can any other pictures of outward things be formed by it, different from those admitted by, or retained in, the passive sensory. Such as these are, the soul is obliged from the law of the human nature, to consider them to be true; and although, in certain cases of their confusion, or imperfect traces, it endeavours to rectify their irregularity, or supply their defects, every effort may prove ineffectual; and when it is so, the soul must yield to deranged and false perceptions. In sudden shocks of nature, the memory of them is lost; and, as if we were to be taught, not to be surprised at this subsiding of the human faculties, the reversion of them is made a matter of experience; when, in sleep, the register of them being obscured, the fantastic imagery of dreams, and visions of the night, are presented to us. But, without pretending to be precise.

precise in an argument that respects the mysterious union of the soul and the body, we may justly observe, that, were the human mind a compound of atoms, or dissoluble matter, and not of a substance indivisible, there would ensue in the transports of anger and rage, a thousand times oftener than is beheld, not only accessions of insanity, but total destruction and death to the corporeal frame. The immaterial principle may well be reckoned the *vis abdita*, that secret power of conservation, as far as it can be exerted in the mortal nature of the body; and without the supposition of which, neither Epicurus, nor his poetical disciple, found that a physical explication of the human constitution could be given.

It may be added, that the decay of the mental faculties in old age, is, by no means, so verified from experience as is commonly stated by the objectors to the immateriality of the soul. There are many testimonies to the contrary afforded in history; and of which the enumeration by Cicero *, although a signal one, may be reckoned no more than equal to what may be found in every age. That the vigour or decline bears a proportion to the former habits of body and mind, may well be allowed: And that both may be undone by unsuitable and vicious usages. This is consistent with the moral scheme of human life. But most remarkable and striking are the many examples of the powers of reflection and reason being, in the advanced years of a virtuous life, prolonged to its utmost stage. What is truly called the *man*, is seen so entire, that any disciple of Lucretius may find it difficult † to conclude with him, that the rational soul, as well as the animal life, dissolves like smoke in the air. The axiom, generally admitted in philosophy, opposes the conclusion, that any thing having being can, without the act of omnipotent power, go to nothing. Much less may that principle in the universe, which is the superior one, and has activity, and intelligence in itself,

* De Senectute.

† ——— Ergo, dissolvi, animae quaeque natura,

Oportet ut fumus in altas aeris auras, &c.—Lucret. lib. 5.

What was easier to say than that the soul being no more than a compound of atoms, would, at the death of the body, be dissolved into them?

self, cease to be ; but, on the contrary, as every essence in nature has its destination, it must be judged to have the continuation of its existence in a proper and appointed place. We now proceed to the exhibition of Epicurus's theology.

It was a fundamental doctrine, in his philosophy, that, between *atoms* and a void, the only two principles in the universe, there was no middle, or third nature to be found. Yet this, it appears, hindered him not from asserting the eternal existence of beings, having certain divine, or godlike attributes. For such a bold stride over his general principle, he advanced an argument no less singular than incongruous with his theory *. It was requisite, he said, when the infinite variety of images or perceptions of objects, fortuitous and perishable, was considered to admit a species of ever permanent and indistructible ones ; in order that, two such opposite existences being found in the universe, the whole might be brought to a balance. He supported this reason, foreign as it was to his physiology, by a more decent and intelligible one ; that of the general persuasion and belief entertained among mankind, in all ages and nations, with respect to the existence of Gods, or divine powers. This consent he brought under his first criterion of truth, *anticipation* ; but left it unperspicuous, whether the common opinion had its source in the anticipated notion, or the latter its origin from the former. He alledged, however, that it could not be the observation of the orderly return of the seasons, and the regular course of the heavenly bodies which excited in men the conceptions of deities ; for, said he, preposterously, how could they ascribe these wonderful appearances to the Gods, without knowing previously that there were such beings ? Yet allowing, contrary to the known fact, that they had the notion of deities from *anticipation*, he could hardly deny, that when so known, men generally admitted them to be the rulers of the elements, and adored them as the causes of the phenomena in nature. But how were they, who had no intercourse with the world, discovered to mankind ? They were found by them, in most questionable shapes ; in *apparitions* of them in sleep and dreams. Of the human form they seemed,

but

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. 1.

but far more majestic in their size and attitude ; and although said to be peaceable in their motions, they were, in the dormant state of the senses, apt enough to impress terror upon the imagination. Yet of these fantastic images, which, perhaps, were never beheld by any, even in their wildest dreams, Epicurus had the effrontery to affirm, that men, in their waking thoughts, made deities. In ridicule of any rational evidence of the being of the Gods, the extravagant assertion may be understood to be meant, but most unsuitably by him ; who allowed not even the Socratic irony to pass in philosophic reasoning, and gave it as a rule, that no opinion should be supported by fictions, either our own, or those of others.

The conception of the nature or substance of Epicurus's *deities*, was no less absurd than his forged account of the impressions of their existence on human minds. To express their constitution, he had recourse to the language and fictions of Homer, and the poets. They were said to be not body, but something, *as it were body* ; and to have blood, not human, *but what resembled it*. But how, said the academics, came they, if eternal, to be of the human form ? Was the figure of man a known one before it was casually produced in nature ? He was no less embarrassed to assign a quiet or safe place for their residence. The infinity of space could not afford it ; thorough which the atoms constantly shot with an *impetus* surpassing that of the Solar beams ; and where worlds after worlds, alternately generated, and dissolving, might tumble around them. They were of too refined a contexture, he said, to be annoyed by the atoms ; and, at any rate, it was not necessary to point out their abode. It was enough to understand, that it could not be in any such world as ours ; and that a seat, serene and peaceful, like what the poets feigned of Olympus, was only suitable to them ; who, far from being a company of such reeling and turbulent divinities as those of Homer, were to be conceived to have no anger, passion, emotion, desire, concern, or any affection, extraneous to themselves, and the sense of their own beatitude. This was the proper idea to be formed of deities, or perfect beings ; who, knowing themselves to be happy, neither think, intend, or act any thing beyond the delight they have in self contemplation.

tion *. No part could they be supposed to take in the making of worlds; and as little to be concerned or disturbed with superintending them, and their casualties. But, had these happy beings no intercourse amongst themselves, nor any communication of their thoughts and feelings; and, did they understand nothing of what passed in the universe, in which they were included? It was to be remembered, that they were not pure intellectual beings, but of a frame that had a species of corporeity in it; so that they could not be conceived to be altogether free from defects, and intermissions of their contemplations, or that variability in their thoughts and affections, which is inseparable from the highest qualification of body. To imagine that they were equally happy, whether separated from one another, or in association, or that, according to the Epicurean idea, they were, all and each of them, under the same constant intoxication of pleasure, were surely very difficult conceptions; especially when the mode of their felicity was no more defined, than the *genus* of their composition was ascertained. Homer, and the poets, who gave a like ambiguous account of the nature of their celestial divinities, were not so inexplicit with respect to their enjoyments; but, more *physically* just in their notions, assigned them *nectar* and *ambrosia*, to support their beatitude.

Still, however, they were represented as moral beings, wise, benevolent, and good; and, therefore, happy and blessed. But admitting, for argument's sake, that they might be such, in some incomprehensible manner, the next question was, how they were known to mankind under this character? From the alledged imagery of them in dreams, this discovery of their attributes could never be derived; for, inoffensive and quiet as they were said to be, they gave no evidence of their wisdom, or intelligence; and only showed their stupenduous forms with a mimickry not to be understood, whether it was meant for good or for ill. Demo-

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critus,

* Quod, si jam rerum ignorem primordia quae sint;
 Hoc tamen, ex ipsis coeli rationibus ausim
 Confirmare, aliisque ex rebus reddere multis,
 Nequaquam nobis *divinitus* esse paratam,
 Naturam rerum: Tanta stat praedita culpa.—*Lucret. ibid.*

critus, the father of this miserable philosophy, it has been observed, appeared to have entertained his own fears about them; and it cannot be said that Epicurus's visions of them were such as to rid mens minds altogether of apprehensions; notwithstanding it was reckoned to be the noble aim, and boast of his philosophy, to deliver them all from dread of the anger of the gods, or any effect of their interference in human affairs. To be wise and knowing, especially in a measure approaching to what is divine in these excellencies, implies not only an understanding of what actually *is*, but of what may exist in the nature of things. Wisdom, conjoined with benevolence, rests not, simply, in the knowledge of what is good and excellent, but affects to produce every possible species of these qualities. A benevolent being, to whom the attributes of supreme wisdom, goodness, and power, belong, is not only conservative of its own felicity, but desires, and delights to *do good*, and to create life and enjoyment where it was not before. Hence worlds of sensible beings have been called into existence by the universal parent; who, invisible to the mortal eye, is exhibited to the contemplative mind in his works. His divine benignity, extended amongst his creatures, is recognised by them, and felt as a motive to cherish the principle by which they live, and to exert it freely and mutually in their actions. From the sense of his providential goodness, men form the conception of his amiable nature and perfections, and approve of virtue as the venerable and happy imitation of them.

Instead of this intelligible character of Deity, Epicurus substituted a set of chimerical beings, justly called his *monogrammic* gods, known, by no act, or energy in the universe, to exist; and understood, indeed, by his more instructed disciples, to be held forth only in shew, that he might not be charged with Atheism. They exulted in what they knew to be his meaning; which, in the stile of Lucretius *, made them spurn, as dust under their feet, all the prevailing notions of religion and the gods, and to equal his divinities in their superiority over all mental perturbation. Yet what was their mighty attainment, says Plutarch, supposing

* Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim,
Obteritur; nos exaequat victoria coelo.—*Lucret. lib. 6. ver. 50.*

posing it to be complete * ? It could be no more than what has fallen to the lot of the brute creatures; which, having no understanding of their own natures, are excluded from any conception of those of other beings in the world.

Authors, however, there have been, and those, too, the friends of religion, who have taken Epicurus's theology in a more favourable light. It appeared to them an uncandid and harsh judgment to impute dissimulation to him, who had advanced the just maxim, that not those who rejected the vulgar notions of the gods, but such as characterised them unworthily, were to be accounted impious; and, in consequence of this sentiment, had boldly, and without fear of incurring the fate of Anaxagoras or Socrates, taught publicly, in Athens, theological principles, subversive of those commonly entertained. Amongst others inclined to this opinion, Lactantius is one; who, although none of the Christian Fathers has more impugned and confuted Epicurus's false theism, yet chose to deliver a qualified judgment with respect to its author, and to suppose that a real misapprehension of the perfections of Deity may have led him into error; and that, having made it a fundamental principle in his philosophy, that supreme beatitude consisted in absolute tranquillity †, and, measuring this tranquillity by his human and imperfect idea of it, he might conclude, not feignedly, but erroneously, that the world could not be governed by Deity, without a participation of disturbance incompatible with his supreme felicity. He might also conceive, that, although detached from all concern with the world, and mankind, adoration was due to the gods, on account of their excellent natures. Upon this, or similar ground, several authors, in the aera of the revival of letters, undertook to apologise for the most of Epicurus's theological and moral theories, notwithstanding of their being long under a species of condemnation. Amongst the moderns, beside Gassendi, du Rondel and Bayle have made the same effort; and, with them, Mr Hume has

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joined

* Advers. Colotem.

† Quod putaret Epicurus a Deo esse alienum, malum facere, atque nocere. Sic enim Epicuri ratiocinatio processit: Si Deus mundum gubernet, impiis irascitur; ira tranquillitatem debilitat: Quicquid tranquillitatem debilitat, a Dei beatitudine alienum est.—*Lactant. de Ira Dei, cap. 13.*

joined his pen. They take up the argument, not in a general way, but that, in a consistency with the received principles of the heathen theology, Epicurus's vindication might well be attempted. We shall, chiefly, consider what is advanced by the two last.

The French critic, in advancing his arguments, has not forgot to throw in his favourite one *, respecting the ancient and general belief of two eternal and opposite principles, the one good and the other evil, according to the *Manichean* scheme. But, more in point to the question, he alledges, that the necessary existence and eternity of matter being assumed by all the ancient philosophers, as they had no conception of any thing being created out of nothing, there was a difficulty in apprehending, even upon the supposition of a co-eternal mind, or deity, how his power of moving, or arranging a substance not generated, and uncongenial with his own, could be properly and effectually exerted. Considering, therefore, the intractability of matter, to which might be ascribed the mixture of natural and moral evil found here below, it might be a question, whether it would not have been better to have suffered it to remain in its original state? At least, the philosophy which taught that the gods had not interfered with such a substance, might be considered as doing them most honour, since it acquitted them of all objections that might be made to their wisdom and goodness, on account of the many distresses experienced in a world such as ours, and in the contemplation of which it might be maintained, that evil was much more prevalent than good. Hence Epicurus stated his argument against its being the work of a deity possessed of consummate wisdom and goodness †, in terms that grossly arraigned the divine perfections. In this kind of argument, all the force of Bayle's reasoning, and that of every espouser of sceptical impiety, in contradiction to the rational principles of theism, and the demonstrative proofs of the Deity's wise and good

* Dictionnaire Hist. et Critique, article Epicurus, remarq. S.

† Either, said Epicurus, he wills to remove the evils of human life, and cannot, and then his impotence must be inferred; or he can do it, and will not, which concludes his being defective in benevolence; and, if he has neither the will nor the power, he is not a divinity; or, if he has both, whence came the evils, or why not taken away?

good government of his creatures and works, will be found ultimately to terminate.

Whence comes evil, in the natural and moral world, admitted to be produced, and superintended, by an all-wise, powerful, and beneficent being? has been the oldest question stated amongst such of mankind as were addicted to the study and contemplation of sublunary being and human life. It is urged as forcibly in *Job's* complaints, as in Epicurus's queries; but with a solution in the one diametrically opposite to the inferences of the other. In what manner, says the latter, was Plato's God employed before the world is supposed to have been made by him? If the work was fit and competent to him, why was it deferred for an instant of time, and not immediately produced? Could Epicurus tell, in what point of time, or *eternity*, any of his worlds was generated from atoms; so that one of them could be reckoned to have had its origin earlier, and in more ancient days, than another? The question, why the divine being created a material world? is of another kind, but a strange one to be put by the Epicureans, or Corporealists, upon the supposition of the intractability of matter, which they hold forth to have, in itself, the capacity of producing whatever is called great, fair, good, and admirable in the world. But, as they have never been able to define or describe what it is, and, in fact, make it either an imaginary substance, or an occult quality in nature, we may presume that it had no being of itself, but was a *created thing*; and then we can have no doubt, that its *maker* knew what he made. The next question comes to be, Has it received all the perfection of which we can understand its nature to be capable? We certainly can conceive nothing, that is body, more perfect than the visible world is in its form and constitution. As it is, to us, the image of perfection, in its kind, so it is the occasion of our having an idea of what perfection is in such an object, which, consisting of several parts, appears to be one *whole*, complete in itself. Since, then, the world bears the outward form of a perfect work, if it be affirmed, that, in another view of its constitution, this idea is not carried on, but contraveeened, there must be proved to exist in it, in that respect, a principle, of such a nature and influence, as ought not, at all, to be found or permitted in a world, formed and governed by unerring wisdom,

wisdom, and goodness unbounded. But it was disputable, whether a principle of that description did take place in the world; and alledged, that, although mens partial and inadequate judgments of what are called the natural and moral evils of human life, might suggest such a conception of them, yet, without pretending to determine fully with regard to their cause and tendency, a juster idea might be formed of them, upon a more deliberate and mature contemplation of the qualified nature of beings, created and finite, and whose perfection could never be extended beyond the *law* of their several natures and spheres.

Hence the philosophers of antiquity, and especially those of the Platonic school, who considered the formation of the corporeal world as, from the nature of matter, involving something defective, or repugnant to perfection in its elements, conceived at the same time, that even the incorporeal and intelligible system of beings comprehended some orders of them inferior to others in perfection. They did not suppose, that the essential goodness of the Deity, which moved him to the production of creatures, stopt at the formation of only one class of them; whose perfection and felicity, howsoever exalted, and nearest his own, was yet *necessarily* limited. No sphere of them, unless carried on to infinity, could include in it so much felicity as a multiplication of the number of spheres finite; although they contained unequal and subordinate degrees of happiness. There was therefore wide room left for the extended operation of the divine goodness, by giving being to numberless ranks of creatures, which, in respect of perfection and felicity, might bear a proportion to, but not be on a level with the highest, or quite equal to one another. If, in the lengthened series of them, the lowest being a compound of body and mind, or of the *divisible* and *undivided* principle, as the visible world was, incurred such a measure of imperfection, as to produce apparent perturbation in its corporeal parts, and pain and evil to sensible beings in it; they still conceived, that neither of these was of that magnitude, or influence, as to render the principle of evil the predominant one; and, if it ever proved so, it was found to be the lot of those who abused their free agency, and vitiated their rational natures. In general, the pain or evil was considered by them as partial, and having always some mixture of good, or being convertible

convertible into it; and, therefore, correctives and remedies, both natural and moral, were applied, and had their operation, and would, finally, prove effectual to exterminate the evil; while, in the mean time, for mitigation of it, the measure of the natural pleasures of human life was much superior to its pains.

Amongst other arguments which Bayle uses to prove the predominancy of pain, it is alledged by him, that pleasure is only a *negative*, but pain a *positive* thing. This position, however, beside belying human experience, is an absurdity. For if, of two perceptions supposed to be opposite, one be turned into a negative, so likewise may the other. Pain may be as well affirmed to be no more than a negation of pleasure. According to Epicurus's doctrine, the absence of pain was held to be the highest pleasure. Why, then, said his opponents, should not the vacuity of pleasure be accounted the greatest pain? But, without regarding these quibbling arguments, it may be observed, that it appears, except in such cases as respect the conservation of life, or the satisfaction of the natural appetites, that the sense, or estimate of what is pleasant or painful, is by no means uniform among mankind, but varied, according to the difference of their age, their education, their circumstances, and habits. To the generality of the human race, simply *to be*, and have the bare necessities of life, is happiness; in such a measure, that hardly the desire, or conception of a higher enjoyment, is entertained by any of them. In infancy, the slight and alternate touches of pleasure and pain, prepare them, insensibly, for the checquered scene of life. The vivacity natural to youth throws over it the most pleasing colours; and the advancement to manhood does not, for a considerable time, vary the prospect. Near a third part of human life is gone, before any settled thought is formed of its calamities and evils, natural and moral; declaimed upon as they are by the morose, the infirm, and the aged, or those of extravagant and disappointed hopes; but with little or no impression upon minds otherwise affected. It is the more remarkable, and an argument of the *providential* alleviation of the pains and troubles complained of in the state of humanity, that this sentiment takes place in outward circumstances unfavourable to it. Notwithstanding men, crowded together in large societies, find civil life is to be supported by
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the excitement and play of all their passions, good and bad, and emulation, envy, avarice, and ambition, operate with their contagious force; the bulk of them are seen to accommodate their desires and affections to their conditions, and to find amidst their daily labours and toils, regarded by those in a superior station as the greatest sufferings, a contentment, and sufficiency of good, which, in respect of uniformity and constancy, is equalled by no other experienced in a different situation, and would indeed fly from them, or be lessened, in any supposed change. Their love of life, and the natural desire of the continuance of their existence, renders the doctrine of the immortality of human souls acceptable to them, while, without proper instruction, their conceptions of felicity in another state rise not much above those of their present enjoyments.

It is their ignorance and stupidity, says the gloomy and querulous philosopher, that makes them acquiesce in their condition; otherwise, the consideration of the moral, no less than the natural ills of human life, would convince them that there is no such order taken with respect to it, as announces a divine government. Why is not the life of man prolonged beyond the short term of years within which it is confined; or else its abridgement appointed to be the lot of the vicious and wicked? But, there are no proper checks, or remedies provided, against the prevalence of vice, and its pernicious effects, while the good are often abruptly cut off, or exposed to suffer on account of their virtues.

To state it as an objection to divine and providential wisdom, and goodness, being exercised in the world, that human life is of short continuance, must appear a strange and inconsistent argument, when it is alledged that man's life is over-run with evils. For, why should it be complained of as short, if, indeed, it be so fraught with misery? But we may well understand, that, if it were left to men's judgments, they would never agree in fixing its proper period. The author of Life, who alone perfectly knows its scheme and destination, has therefore set the boundary to it, and to each man's steps within that general limit. It has, however, even in our partial and inadequate survey, sufficient marks of a wise and gracious design. The laws and conditions of its well being, or unhappiness, to individuals, or communities of men,

men, are as much fixed, and rendered evident, and obligatory, as if the lives of particular men were to be protracted through ages. To the subsistence of the rudest state of human society, for any period of time, a degree of humanity and virtue is made absolutely necessary. The total absence of these principles, if it can be supposed in the families, or associated tribes of mankind, would operate as effectually to their perdition, as the confusion of the laws of motion in bodies would do in the system of the natural world. Beside such fatal effects of the fierce passions of men being prevented by the innate principle of self-preservation, unusual appearances in nature, or unexpected accidents in life, concur to make impressions upon their uncultivated minds, equivalent to a moral discipline. Under the apprehension of supernatural powers, and the dread of their displeasure, they are disposed the more to combine, and seek support from one another. The social affections are extended among them. Private and public good is found to arise from the restraint of the passions, and a regard to equity. Laws are devised for the benefit of individuals, and the community; and their institution is approved, and submitted to, not as being only the appointment of men, but as authorized and sanctioned by the will of the superior and divine powers.

In the more improved condition of human society, some become studious of the world's constitution, and of human nature. Amidst various and uncertain theories concerning the former, it was soon evinced, beyond a doubt, with respect to the latter, that human life, having happiness for its end, was subjected to an unalterable law, for the attainment of that end; the law of reason operating so as to produce the principle of virtue in the human mind. Here we need not particularise those illustrations of the moral principle which philosophy has been shown to have copiously afforded: But it may be remarked, as a singularity, that those philosophers who set *deity* aside, or denied a providential order in human affairs, allowed that a moral scheme of human life was demonstrable, and had a foundation in nature, without being connected with these fundamental principles. From them, however, and it was no wonder, chiefly came the arguments and complaints, that virtue was not duly supported; that no divine favour was shown

to it ; and that, upon such a supposition, a better lot in life must have been assigned to the virtuous man, and a different distribution made of good and evil, than what obtains in the world. It may be observed, in general, upon this objection, that as human wisdom, in pretending to range the celestial bodies in another order than that in which they are placed, is proved to have committed the grossest errors, so its failure may well be suspected in the correction of the moral oeconomy of things, and the providential dispensations respecting mankind. The wiser, and more adequate plan, has never yet been shown ; or else, the hints given for obviating or removing what are reckoned partial evils, have been such as subverted the general laws of the human system ; and, for the sake of immediate rewards to virtue, diminished or annulled its noblest and worthiest exertions, arising from probationary situations ; without which, in human life, it could hardly be known.

It is therefore the part of philosophy, before determining what is an *evil* or a good to men, as free agents, and in a state of moral discipline, to consider not only the propriety of a probationary course, for the exercise of virtue, but the connection it may have with a more extended and higher system than the sublunary one. All things visible to us exhibit, even amidst partial incongruities, a chain of relations and concords, in the various classes of beings, of which we can neither trace the beginning or the end. The only rule of judgment competent to us, and the probable one, is to advert to the importance and extent of the faculties of the beings, in any particular scale of them, contemplated by us ; and from thence to form an opinion with respect to their relative nature and destination. Considered in this light, man appears evidently to be endowed with powers surpassing his present station. His rational faculties, his conceptions of things, his motives of action, his desires and aims, are all of a cast far beyond that of any other being known in the corporeal world. All the tribes of terrestrial creatures appear to be in subserviency to him, yet none of them are his proper associates. There is but the slightest trace of a connection betwixt his intelligence and their greatest sagacity. Viewed in the interminated scale of beings, which ascends, as well as descends, he may be reckoned, as pronounced by philosophers, that *intermediate one*, that *link* in the chain, that

that connects the visible and invisible world, but which holds principally, and most congenially, with the superior nature. His rational contemplations, and his virtuous energies, correspond to it; and he is then only in true character when they are so directed. He aspires after the enlargement of his intelligent faculties; and accounts not his labour to that end a hardship, or the exertions requisite for the improvement of his moral excellencies an evil, but a real good. Conscious of acting in conformity to the law of reason, and in imitation of the acts of sovereign wisdom that rules in the universe, he trusts that his progress is not limited to the sphere of mortality. The efficiency of virtue to present happiness, he has proved, as far as in the corporeal state it can be, but not in that measure which is conceivable in a future one. But to what pitch of felicity the virtuous soul may be raised hereafter, or to what penal sufferings the grossly vicious one may be condemned, is a point, which as divine wisdom only can determine, so supernatural revelation alone can unfold.

Here the question is taken up by Mr Hume *, in a point of view that shows how he could touch the nicest hinges of metaphysical disputation, with singular ingenuity. The reasoning he employs in apology for Epicurus's theological positions, at least according to a certain representation of them, is such as we may well believe hardly entered into the conception of that philosopher, or any of his disciples; although an argument similar to it may be traced amongst Aristotle's metaphysical subtilities †, refined upon by his commentators and the schoolmen.

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* Vide Essay XI. Philosophical Essays.

† It appears that Aristotle's principle of the *Deity's immobility*, and his abstruse reasoning upon it, *Metaphys. lib. 14. c. 6.* had led his scholastic commentators into the extravagant, and, as it may be reckoned, the impious notion, that whatever the Supreme Being willed or did, he always, and from eternity, actually performed. As the Stagirite's imagination was, that act in him preceded power, and that he was to be contemplated, never as in *potentiality*, but as in act and power, it was inferred, that one simple act could only be attributed to him; otherwise, said they, he is not immutable in his nature, if he passed from a state of *non agency* to *agency*. The scholastics of the 12th and 13th century, who left no thread of metaphysics untwisted, took up this fallacious one, and made it a topic in their theology. It

The first part of the argument tends to prove, that there can be no just analogical process of our ideas, when we reason from effects to their cause; since we can ascribe no more perfection of powers, or qualities, to the latter, than what are plainly discovered in the former. Although a certain effect proves a cause adequate to it to be necessary, it does not therefore follow, that more efficiency belongs to it, and such as extends to its having powers that are not to be collected from the effect, since the one, in unexceptionable reasoning, should be measured exactly by the other. Hence, when we estimate the power, wisdom, and goodness, of the original cause of the world, and exalt them beyond what its production ascertains them to be, it must be reckoned only an assumption, and not a just inference. With less propriety, still, can we conclude, that its system, or oeconomy, may be corrected and improved, by future scenes being opened to us, expressive of these excellencies. The Deity is a single being in the world: He may, or he may not, have other attributes than those exhibited to us; but we cannot make such inferences with regard to his purposes, as we can do about the intentions and actions of men, whose general consistency of conduct may be understood from experience and observation.

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was a *thesis* of the celebrated Abelard, without meaning to set bounds to the divine power, that, considering it as ever conjoined with his infinitely wise and good will, it was contradictory, and not to be conceived that the Deity would, or *willed* to do any thing, other than what he directly, and in fact, performed. This point was also stated by Peter Lombard, the famous master of the *sentences*, in his *Collect* of theological disputations. The similarity of the argument to that above stated, is obvious. The one would prove, that the Deity could not do less than complete and perform, by the same act, all his will and purpose: The other implies, that we have no ground to infer that he could do more than what he has done. The one concludes, that, from his immutable nature, he was necessitated to do every thing, at once, which entered into the view or plan of his wisdom: The other imports, that, in a rational judgment, we must conclude that he has done, to the utmost of his intelligible perfections. There appears to be less presumption in saying, according to the latter argument, that, so far as our reason goes, or can be conceived by us, it must be so in the active power of the supreme cause, than to maintain, with the school bred Theologians, that it was contradictory and impossible to suppose it otherwise.

The first remark to be made upon the general reasoning against any just process of our ideas, when we argue, by analogy, from effects to their cause, is, that it is not supported by experience, but rather contradictory to it. How does it appear, that, in any given effect, the cause is no more than equal to it? In the sceptical philosophy, it is alledged, that we understand so little about a cause or power in general, that the least thing in nature may be the cause of the greatest effect. By what rule of reason, then, do we proceed, if, beholding an effect produced, we conceive, and affirm, that no more could be done than was actually done by its cause? We surely cannot judge abstractly of the cause, so as to make such restriction. The effect shows to us what is produced, but not all that could be accomplished by it. In the qualifications of any material cause, as they cannot be inferior in kind, or fewer in number, to those generated in the effect, so their bare equality to it in power is hardly conceived by us as a sufficiency. But, allowing it be so in mathematical theories, it appears to be otherwise in the works of nature. By the more stable and permanent causes, the effects are not only repeated incessantly, but seem to be diversified and enlarged; as in the earth's power of vegetation. It is increased by culture in various degrees; and is even conceived by us to surpass the quantity of plants or vegetables that have been, or are generated upon its surface. The science of mechanics proves to us what accumulated force resides in the instruments of corporeal motion, such as the muscles of animal bodies; which, although fitted to their use, could, in other positions, or with levers of more length, produce effects hundreds of times greater than they do. In signal productions of the human mind, whatever strength of reason, or power of imagination, they display, we still conceive the intelligent or ingenious faculties of their authors to be more than competent to them. The maxim, therefore, that causes are strictly commensurable by their effects, is not only unverified by, but irreconcilable with, the phenomena of nature, as they appear to us; without considering whether they arise from material or immaterial principles. But, if affirmed with respect to intelligent causes of things, such as men, who act freely, and with choice, to special ends, and may exert their powers in several degrees, without coming to the *ultimatum* of them, it
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can less be admitted as a rule in our reasoning about the qualification of such powers, or a just ground of concluding them to be in equality to their effects.

But more especially in our contemplations of the attributes of the original and supreme cause, and comparing them with the world of beings produced by him, they can never be reckoned in exact proportion to one another. Great, stupendous, and, to limited minds, a boundless object, as the creation is, yet it is necessarily finite. It comprehends not either the infinity of his essence, or the plenitude of his natural and moral perfections. He would not otherwise be that one self-existent and *single* being in the universe, to whom, in excellence, no other could be compared; but might be reckoned to have the equality of his nature, and attributes, in the constituted world. As Deity, having an eternal existence, separate from the world he hath made, peculiar and incommunicable attributes must belong to him; as the original of being, he may be known to all rational creatures from their frame, and that of the world; but not completely investigated in it. But to any order of them, such as the human, the knowledge of his natural and moral perfections, as everlastingly the same, and immutable, is competent. Mutability is imperfection, which cannot be an original and self-existent principle; and, if supposed, would imply not a state of existence, but only what is equal to a negation of it, to all things that are; and leave a tendency to destruction as the sole foundation of the subsisting and established universe. As immutable, the Deity is *true*, not only in himself, as having ever the same nature and perfections, but also *morally so*, in respect of his manifestations of them to the rational world. To exhibit, to intelligent beings, any copy of them that is not the just one, as far as it goes, would imply either error or guile; error in infallible wisdom; deceit in a being who varies not the idea of his eternal mind, no more than the uniform constancy of his nature. He has not, therefore, *other attributes*, or such as differ in the least from the testimony he has given of these that are essential to him. The divine character expressed in them, although not altogether perfect, is a true one; and such a discovery of it to reflecting minds, that, instead of imagining that an unparalleled *being*, as he is, in the world,

world, they can make no such inferences, respecting his purposes, as those of creatures like themselves may admit of; it is on this very foundation, and because he is the *one invariable*, that they can trust with more assurance than may be done about creatures liable to change, that he will do nothing inconsistent with what he has already done. The consistency or similarity may not be obvious, or altogether intelligible, to our narrow minds. There may be to them an appearance of contrariety; yet as we behold, in nature, apparent contraries made to correspond, we have reason to judge that it is our imperfect conceptions of the objects, or of their tendency, that represent an opposition in the nature of things, where there is, in reality, none. We do not conceive that the Deity was necessitated to create, but that he was a creator of his own free will, and from the motive of his essential goodness; or that the world he made could not have been otherwise framed than it is, and in a manner equally admirable; if he had so purposed in his allwise mind, whatever is effected may be conceived to have been practicable in more ways than in one, by infinite understanding. But the constitution of the world being made, by its author, such as it is, we cannot, without impugning the immutability of his nature, suppose that it can be reversed by him, or its principles counteracted. The universal laws of the system, natural and moral, must remain unaltered, unless that system be extinguished. The intelligent beings, of every order, comprehended in it, as they are physically and morally subjected to these laws, can know no other as divine. To observe what operation they have in their particular spheres, is the most natural and proper exercise of their reason, and their best knowledge. If, with respect to such a compound nature as the human, there arises a doubt about the duration of its existence, information, when not derived from revelation, must come, as has been mentioned, from considering duly what signal difference there appears to be between the faculties of the body and those of the mind, marked clearly even in their state of union. The one, in early years, attains to all its capacity of action and enjoyment: The other advances slowly, and unfolds its powers in a gradual manner. Science beams upon the soul, when the eye of the body becomes dim. The lights of reason are often most steady, and the source of knowledge more enlarged,

ged, when the corporeal senses fall into decay. In the scale of nature, those substances are known to be most durable which arrive by slow degrees to their maturity. Both inanimate and animated beings, may be observed to be under the influence of this law. It is not, therefore, a bare assumption, but an inference warranted by the analogy of nature, to conclude that it obtains with regard to the human species, whose rational powers, no more than their affections, are extended now to their utmost reach. Creatures, far inferior to them, when they attain not their perfection, either in the place, or in the first form of their production, are seen to be advanced to it in another. It requires not a new *will*, or an energy different from the original one, in the supreme and omnipotent cause, to carry on the various systems of beings he has formed, according to the special laws of their natures, and to qualify them progressively, and in suitable ways, to correspond to the allwise and good ends, both of his natural and moral government.

Having thus far, for the sake of more rational contemplation than what could be found in Epicurus's particular *Physiology*, insisted chiefly upon his general principles, opposite as they are to the most fundamental truths in Theology, we now dismiss the subject; leaving his gross speculations upon the atomical constitution of the heavens and the earth to those, who, with Lucretius's glosses, can patiently peruse them; or to such, who, from conceit in their profound knowledge of physics, may imagine they can suggest a more plausible theory of materialism. In the next section, will be comprehended his doctrine of *Ethics*.

S E C T.

SECTION IV.

Introduction to the Ethics of Epicurus.—The affection which constitutes the supreme felicity of human nature.—This principle qualified; and the sense in which it is to be taken explained.—Rectified opinions the result of Philosophy.—The doctrine of Man's Free Will asserted.—The pleasure and utility of the Moral Virtues the only source of their eligibility, and the ground of the obligation of justice, and other civil ties.—Remarks upon the reasoning in support of the general principle of Moral conduct held forth by Epicurus, and the espousers of his doctrine.

THE philosophy of morals, or manners, in human life, is the study and knowledge of the *extreme*, or *ultimatum*, of the good or felicity at which human beings can arrive. All men agree, that happiness is the end of their life, and their aim. For, why is life given but to enjoy it, or the desire of continuing it implanted, but that all the felicity it can admit should be embraced? Rarely, indeed, is the object in view justly comprehended; and, often, unsuitable and incompetent means are used, by the generality of men, for obtaining it. Hence are, daily, beheld the abuses of the greatest external advantages that can attend their condition. In vain are comforts thrown around them, which they understand not how to enjoy. Instead of being contented, they are filled with anxiety; and, beside being haunted with cares about what they possess, their quiet is often disturbed by desires of other things *. They

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* Cicero de Finib. lib. 1. pag. 44. Diog. Laert lib. 10. in Epicuri Epist. ad Menecaeum, passim. Stobaei Sententiae, Sermo 16. fol. edit. pag. 155.

languish and complain, that all the good fallen to their share is scanty, and insufficient for their well-being. Do they know what they would have; or consider what comfort there is in being satisfied with little? Their error must lie, either in a false judgment of what is good, or in a tainted heart; which, setting no bounds to its desires, becomes insatiable, or turns sensations, that most men would delight in, to spleen and displeasure.

To philosophise, as we ought, upon this interesting subject, is a serious thing. A shew of sentiment upon it is not sufficient: We must feel ourselves free of prejudices, and sound, in order to relish the salutary maxims of life; unsecured, as it is, beyond the present day, and encouraging no trust in the uncertain prospect of *to-morrow* *. Precarious life requires, that we should know how to spend every day of its continuance in all the happiness it can afford; and not, like children, be only learning, from time to time, what is to be done in its whole course. How many of the aged are thus seen in the infancy of life, and hardly beginning to live, as they ought, when life itself is near its period. Thus foolish men always wander in search of what is placed before them, and might be clearly perceived, if they only kept their eyes open. Life escapes them, without their understanding what it is; while, to the wise, nothing can be plainer than the maxim with respect to it. Let its course be so regulated, that the part which is past give no cause of repentance; and that which is present have no reference for enjoyment to what is to come. The good which is unexpected creates a sweet surprise to the mind; and the less we think we need an addition to the pleasure of the present hour, the more may we congratulate ourselves upon the accession of what was not looked for. Such is the first general principle which the philosophy of life, or true wisdom, teaches. But it is requisite

* How the maxim here expressed accords with the sober doctrine of Epicurus's *Canonicæ*, that have been stated as the foundation of his Ethical rules, is not to be understood. The philosopher, who proposes to rid the human mind of all thoughts of *to-morrow*, by a full draught of the pleasures of the present day, must be supposed to drop all reasoning about the real felicity of human life; and, instead of it, to adopt the strains of Anacreon, every day allured by love, and encircled with myrtles, and *roses dipt in wine*.

sive to explain more particularly what is the extent of the felicity after which men aspire, and in what it consists; and then point out the means necessary to constitute and maintain it in all the circumstances incident to human condition.

There is, in the universe, a felicity supreme, and another inferior; one proper to the gods, and the other to men. The first is a state of being in which beatitude is felt, of the most exalted kind imaginable. Without decreasing, or becoming more intense, it is always the same; pleasure possessed in the full security, that it can be no more diminished in degree, than lost by time. The second is a state of well being, consisting of much good, and inconsiderable ill; in which life may be passed with all the quiet and constancy of agreeable repose that man's mortal condition will permit; while his enjoyments are variable with his circumstances, and may either be augmented or impaired. How vainly do those men boast, who hold forth a more arrogant doctrine, and represent the efficacy of their philosophy to be such as to equal them with the gods? To be inferior only to *Jove*, is a condescension on the part of their wise man. But, without thus insulting the imbecillity of human nature, and pretending to have the faculty of exempting ourselves from the sense of the evils of life, is it not enough to prove them to be capable of alleviation, and so far to admit of it; that, being born, as all men are, to have a share in the common calamities of a precarious existence, true wisdom may enable us to bear them with an equality of mind that will render us, of all others, the least miserable; and, if our particular circumstances do expose us to a more than ordinary accession of evils, to be less impressed with them than any of the uninstructed of mankind could have been in a like situation. To be delivered from ills, which, without a remedy found for them, would have afflicted us, is surely a special happiness; and to enjoy, together with it, all the good our condition places within our reach, is the utmost degree of felicity at which, by any means, we can arrive.

What, then, is the principle or affection found in our nature, upon which may be constituted its chief felicity? It is no other than the sense of pleasure in body and soul, which, instinctively, guides all animals to seek with eagerness what is agreeable to their feelings, and fly from

what is painful to them. Nature, having interwoven it with their frame, calls it forth at their birth: They immediately discover how they are actuated by it; and that, in the budding of all other affections, this primary one is matured. As they grow up, it is cherished; and life is preserved by compliance with it. Can we doubt, therefore, that it ought to predominate, and be followed as the general guide of our desires and aversions? These opposite affections are constantly excited by the sensations of pleasure and pain; which would alone be to us the *criteria* of good and evil, and of what is to be chosen, and what avoided, if the *goods* to be met with in life much exceeded the evils, or if we could as readily shun, as we are inclined to reject the latter. In the different state in which things are found in the world, it is necessary to prescribe some qualifications of the general rule, and not consider it as implying our always choosing pleasure, and rejecting pain; when, in various cases, the inferiority of the latter may be such as to make it despicable; or when, by submission to some greater degrees of it, there may ensue more than a compensation, by the augmented measure of the former. With respect to the admission of the general rule, or of deviations from it, the directory, already given in the *Canonic*s, may be sufficient. Here it is only necessary to be observed, that although, in it, the fundamental principle be limited, there is no contradiction of it incurred. Pleasure is ever desirable, as a good in itself, and pain hateful as a like evil. When the transposition is made, their difference is still perceived; and the latter only eligible from the consideration, that the greater quantity, and better quality, of what is pleasant and agreeable to us, will be the result. In this way, pleasure resigned, and pain suffered, is no more than a confession that there is often presented to us a conjunction of the two, which requires the attention of our reason and prudence, that we may not be led into a mistake about their consequences, as if no immediate pleasure could be followed with pain, or any pain give cause to pleasure. Experience here lies open to us; and we may be soon convinced from it, that, as there ought to be a reasonable pursuit of pleasure, so a tolerance of pain is suitable to the human condition; while our natural love of the one, and aversion to the other, continues unchangeable.

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How absurdly, therefore, do some philosophers exclaim against the sensations of pleasure, as if there were no other but those of the irrational and shameful kind? What is there blameable in cherishing them, not only as congenial to nature, but of utility and profit to life; the frequent calamities of which are relieved by them? When we say, that even any laborious exercise of the body is not to be undergone, but on account of something commodious or profitable arising from it, and that no man is reprehensible, who chooses to have that pleasure in familiarity which has neither any attendant, or consequent uneasiness, or who avoids pain, to which neither present or future pleasure is annexed; do we therefore assent to the doctrine and practice of the blind votaries of pleasure? By no means. On the contrary, we hold it to be abject and odious, as we do those persons who are allured by the blandishments of present pleasure, and suffer themselves to be so corrupted into softness of mind, that the labour productive of agreeable sensations is their aversion, and pleasure taken by them at its first start; and thus, from fear of pain, they relinquish the duties incumbent upon them. For, it is to be remembered, that there are times and occurrences not more to be avoided than wished for, in which the enduring bodily distress is eligible, rather than repelling it, when, by such undesirable suffering, a more grievous load of it may be prevented. But, upon the supposition of circumstances being in our option, the general principle is to be maintained; all pleasure is to be assumed, and all pain rejected.

That the import of this principle may not be misunderstood, or wilfully perverted, either by the espousers of vicious luxury, or the declaimers against rational pleasure, let us more particularly consider what is the extent of the pleasure insisted upon, as the most eligible good. In its just explication, it will be found, instead of supporting the doctrine of the dissolute, and fostering the effeminate sensations of the voluptuous, to have a sobriety in it; which may be accounted severe, and an undue restriction of the enjoyments of sense. The pleasure we assume, as the standard of felicity, consists not alone in what recreates and soothes the senses, and in the progression of such perceptions, but chiefly, and ultimately, in the freedom from all pain. For since, upon such a deliverance, joy is produced, and what causes joy is pleasure, and what:

what excites grief is pain, the total absence, or privation of pain, is justly denominated pleasure. That this estimate is proper, and supported upon the feelings of nature, appears by considering the gratifications of appetite. When hunger is allayed, or thirst quenched, pleasure takes place; and so, in every instance, the removal of pain engenders pleasure. There is, in reality, no *medium* betwixt the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain; nor is it to be alledged that this doctrine holds forth a state in which the two are confounded together. To entertain such a conceit is a fallacy; since no person can be so affected as to have neither the perception of pleasure or pain, or to feel both in the same instant. When the latter is expelled, we always rejoice: Witness the exultation of those delivered from any severe or lingering distemper. But pleasure detracted from, or withheld, does not operate upon us so immediately, or with the same efficacy. To introduce discontent, some special pain must intervene, sufficient to banish the felicity felt in the absence of pleasure.

There are, indeed, men who deride this theory, and account the boundary set by nature and reason to their desires of pleasure, a state of complete indolence, or that in which all activity of body and mind must be suspended. They imagine, it seems, that, unless the actions of life be hurried on like a torrent, there must ensue an ebb of them, that resembles a stagnating pool. Is there not a calm exercise of the human faculties, effectual for all the proper purposes of life, and which, for the sake of the sweet composure and tranquillity attending it, is preferable to the vehemency, and still swelling tide of desires? The various and discordant passions excited by the latter, are too visible amongst mankind, and present repeated scenes of discontent, emulation, and outrageous strife; scenes that could never take place, if men studied the just limitations of their desires, and understood that the fulfilment of them was in vain pursued, unless it was found in the body, free from pain, and the mind from disquiet. To what other satisfaction of their appetites would intemperate men carry on their wishes; or where can it be said that they will stop, after exceeding this bound? Pleasure, it is granted, is of two kinds; one of motion, and another of rest. The first is not the *ultimatum* of good proposed by nature. She gives the stimulations

tions of appetite, in themselves troublesome, not merely for the sake of the immediate pleasure of gratifying them, but that we may taste the more equal, calm, and durable one, which results from being rid of their importunity, and attain that easy, placid, and settled enjoyment, that no bodily pain, or mental uneasiness, may disturb. To have this stable pleasure is the fruition of happiness, to such a height, that, although there may be some accidental interventions of joy and mirth, which may, a little, vary the scene, it cannot receive extension or enlargement, and is as fully enjoyed in finite as in infinite time. The important question then is, by what means is this felicity attainable?

To make this investigation, the lights of reason and philosophy are the only proper and just guides. As what is pleasant to us, and what is painful, is determined by our immediate sensations, so there is a judgment of reason which serves to regulate our opinions of what is good and profitable, and what is evil and disadvantageous. Since our opinions of objects thus produce fixed sentiments of their nature and efficacy, and with these sentiments are always joined the affections of desire or aversion, it is manifest of what importance in life the rectification of our opinions must prove: And this is the salutary instruction which the philosophy of Ethics proposes to give, and that may be the better afforded by it, while it rejects, as an unjust, immoral, and insufferable doctrine, the scheme of a fatal necessity, which involves in one chain of rigid destiny, the acts and volitions of rational beings, and the physical courses of things, void as they are of all animation and sense. But let us not bend our free minds to the fetters of such philosophy. We feel ourselves under no such constraint; and, therefore, ought to know ourselves to have the liberty of moral agents. How horrible is the contrary system, which confounds the distinction of virtue and vice, and renders the practice of the one or the other no proper object of rewards or punishments! Rather than entertain the belief of such a domination of fate over the wills and dispositions of gods and men, we had better espouse what the poets have imagined concerning them, which, however fabulous, does more honour to both, than to represent them in the character of the slaves to destiny. In contradiction to this gross doctrine, it has been suggested, as a proper tenet in Physics, that the *atoms*
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declined a little from the perpendicular, whence might be inferred the free bending of the human mind, which, actuated by reason, has a voluntary motion, and no necessity imposed upon it. Neither do we account Fortune to be a *goddess*, as she is reckoned by some philosophers, who, notwithstanding her blind procedure and mutability, invest her with a divine character. But no such being, whose acts are capricious and inconsistent, can exist among the immortals; and, so far as any one becomes an adept in the wisdom of life, he will find himself crossed by fewer contingencies of fortune. To the truly wise man, a very small share of them will fall. Yet, against their intervention, and such outward constraints upon his actions as are inevitable, he will be prepared and armed. He will find a refuge in the maxims of his philosophy, and in this one above all the rest, that it is better to be unfortunate, with a rational approbation of what he has done, than to be fortunate with no such sense of his conduct.

When this just value is set upon the exercise of right reason, and the free examination, and unbiassed correction of our opinions take place; when we boast of nothing more noble in our constitution, than the power we have of choosing, freely, betwixt good and evil; when that only is accounted morally good or ill, which, knowingly, and without compulsion, we seek after; what a signal overthrow may be given, by the light of philosophy, to vain and false conceptions, and to the prejudices and terrors arising from them? How may we think of the gods without trepidation, and hear the aerial thunder roll, without regarding it as bolts shot by Jove from their placid abodes? How may divinations of every kind be contemned, when we consider, that the predicted events, if they be from necessity, must and will take place; and, therefore, that any premonition, with respect to them, can be of no advantage to us? If, again, they proceed from chance, how can they be foreseen; when all that can be affirmed of them is, that they may, or they may not happen? The study of physics, otherwise of inferior value, may, in respect of proper knowledge of many natural objects, prove helpful to the conceptions of our minds, and render them so far just and advantageous, that no more will be apprehended in the courses, or variations of things around us, than what may be expected from their
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original principles. We may indeed understand, that, although the general constitution of things be fortuitous and variable, yet the casual order that has obtained in them must have, at least, a temporary constancy. The degrees of pleasure and pain, of which our bodies and minds are susceptible, may therefore be considered as fixed by nature. How far the former can be extended, has been declared: With regard to the latter, there is a rule, which must be acknowledged to hold true, that, if moderate in their degree, they may be borne; if excessive, they cannot be lasting *; and, if lengthened out, they cannot be severe. To be subjected to them, in any shape, through life, there is no necessity; and the relief from them is always at hand. Yet those who, in a tolerable condition of life, wish for death, are no less culpable than such as live always under the dread of dying. Life has in it something too desirable to say of it, as some have done, *it had been better not to have been born*; or else, in the moment of birth, to have passed into the gate of death. If this was a fixed sentiment with them, how came it about that they lived so long? If said only in wantonness, or in a hurry of passion, they showed themselves to be fools, or men who had never employed a serious or rational thought upon the important question.

Amongst the erroneous opinions that are corrigible by reason, the conceit, that the wisdom of life is studied, and its moral rules complied with, upon any other motive than that of the pleasure and good derived from them, is a fallacy which ought to be rejected amongst philosophers. For, why should the dictate of nature, that prevails in all other studies and arts, be here disregarded? We do not betake ourselves to the science of medicine for the sake of the art itself, but for the acquisition of health; or to the steerage of a ship, but on account of its utility and benefit in navigation. The wisdom of life is no more than an art of a different kind. The moral virtues are found to be its best rules; nay, so closely connected are they with its greatest good, that there is no such thing as leading a pleasant life, unless we live *wisely, honestly, and justly*, or holding a *wise, honest, and just* course, without experien-

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* Dolor, in longinquitate levis, in gravitate brevis, soleat esse; ut ejus magnitudinem celeritas, diuturnitatem allevatio consoletur. Cic. *ibid.* pag. 45.; et Diog. Laert. *ibid.*

cing the pleasure and delight afforded by it. All other things conducive to pleasure and joy are feeble and transitory, and may be disjoined from the happiness of life; but the virtues are to be held its inseparable and immortal ingredients. Yet, with all these recommendations, why should they be embellished with splendid, but insignificant names, and affirmed to have the characters of beauty, excellence, and laudibility, in themselves, and to be eligible on account of their native charms? For, surely, none would think them praise worthy or desirable, if they were not efficient of pleasure, and subservient to the felicity of life; which, therefore, must have an eligibility superior to them.

To hold forth any other attractive to the virtues, than the powerful one of pleasure and utility, as it has no real foundation in nature, so it is superfluous and unnecessary. To every considerate mind, the sentiment, that virtue is the true pleasure, the chief delight, and joy of human life, and vice its pain and its distress, will be a sufficient motive of action. The disciple of wisdom need only look around him to be convinced, by the clearest evidence, how this proposition is proved an infallible truth. As no city can be happy in the midst of sedition, or family in the discord of its Lords, much less can the human mind, when at variance with itself, have any settled enjoyment. The predominance of the vicious passions, their tumult, and their contrariety to each other, banish all pleasure, and envelope the senses and the mind in a ferment of perturbation. To rescue both from perpetual molestation, there is but one course, which common prudence points out. To distrust the excess of desire, and be reserved in every emotion of the appetites and passions, is the safe counsel suggested by it. Philosophy requires no more than the admission of this principle, in order to display the necessity and expediency of all her moral precepts. Upon it she institutes this rule, so useful and advantageous to the welfare of mankind, that the human desires may well be distinguished into such as are both natural and necessary, and those which are natural, yet not necessary; and a kind to which neither of these predicaments belong *. Of the necessary

* Ne naturales quidem multa desiderant; propterea quod ipsa natura, divitias quibus contenta est, et parabiles, et terminatas habet. Inanium autem cupiditarum, nec modus ullus, nec finis inveniri potest. Cic. *ibid.*

fary desires, upon which life, in its simplest enjoyment, depends, the just estimate is, that they can be satisfied with no great labour or expence. These that are natural may be reckoned to require but a moderate provision; since, as nature itself has contentment, so the measure of wealth adequate to it will be neither unlimited, or surpass commonability in the acquisition. But of the last species, whether as to their measure or their end, no account can be taken. These are the fictitious and unquenchable desires, which have their source in ignorance and folly; and, if we behold the true pleasures of life devoured by them, and that their impetuosity, as well as extravagance, is insufferable, how can we hesitate a moment to pronounce, that their turbulent rule is to be reprobated; and the gentle sway of reason and virtue, these sure guardians of peace and tranquillity, be substituted in their room. In this decision, we only testify that prudence is desirable for the pleasure it brings, and folly to be rejected for its many molestations. In a similar manner, philosophy instructs us to form a proper estimate of the pleasures and pains of the body, and those of the mind. Notwithstanding both have their origin in the senses, and whatever species of them the mind perceives, are referable to impressions made on the bodily organs; yet reason calls us to observe what difference there is in their energy, as it may affect the happiness or misery of human life*. Evident it appears, that the mental pleasures and pains are greater than the corporeal ones. For, although, whenever the body is pained, the mind sympathises, the former only is affected with what is present, but the latter with the remembrance of the past, and anxiety about the future. Supposing, even in the force of imagination, that we apprehend some mighty mischief hanging over us, and that the pains of the mind are, in this way, vastly augmented beyond those of the body; yet, as we may well learn to be under no such dread, the abolition of the imaginary pain must be a pleasure to us. Besides, we naturally throw off the memory of any painful suffering, and willingly recal the impressions of pleasure: So much, indeed, does the recollection of what has soothed the mind operate upon

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* Nam corpore, nihil nisi praesens, et quod adest, sentire possumus; animo, autem et praeterita, et futura. Ibid.

us, that it may be reckoned, in the midst of the severest bodily pains, to be that balm to the soul which damps the sensation of them. This constancy, at least, the mind, with its capacity of recollection, and the habit of tranquillity, may discover in the worst sufferings of the body, and not only repel its painful feelings, but beget an intrepidity and firmness invincible by them.

When rectified opinions are, by reason and philosophy, thus made to hold their place in the mind, and the natural and just principle embraced, that the greatest good in body and in mind, with the necessary distinctions of true and false pleasure insisted upon, is to be invariably sought after, and the greatest evil of both as constantly avoided; we may understand how the virtues of temperance, fortitude, justice, and others that are allied to them, become eligible. The attraction to them all, upon due inquiry, will appear to turn upon the desire of pleasure, and the sense we have of it, either as individuals, or as joined with others in society. Prudence must be owned to be their true parent; being that eye which nature has given men to discern their best good, and the way to attain it. It views every virtue in the light of a benefit; and therefore concludes it to be a desirable disposition. No pleasure is, in itself, an evil; neither is intemperance avoided, or temperance observed, because pleasure is to be declined, but upon the rational and cogent motives that have been explained*. Temperance, therefore, is that virtuous affection which springs from the prudent admonition of the mind, with respect to the unhappy tendency of men's desires and aversions, when their objects are blindly, and without controul, pursued. Indulging only the sober demands of nature, it proves the quiet and peaceable satisfaction attending compliance with them. The intemperate cannot avoid altogether making the same judgment of what ought to be done, in order to obtain a real and lasting pleasure. They are often known to resolve, but have not the steadiness to abide by their resolutions. The dupes either of their deceitful imaginations of what is truly good, or betrayed by their inconstancy, they run the disastrous

course

* *Temperantia est, enim, quae in rebus aut expetendis, aut fugiendis, rationem ut sequamur, monet. Ibid.*

course of fools; or else, hover between the fits of remorse and the strength of their passions, dissatisfied with their past conduct; and yet, still addicted to follow the same course in future.

As temperance restrains the excesses of desire and aversion, which are too commonly prevalent with men, *fortitude* does the same with regard to the impressions of fear; and from like sentiments, suggested by reason, that the dastardly soul is miserable, and the brave one free from what is a continual perturbation*. It is not surely any laborious performance, or the sufferance of pain, or trials of our patience, assiduity and vigilance, or what is so much commended under the name of industry, or fortitude itself, that engages us to be brave; but we are impelled to these exertions, that we may not live in constant dread and anxiety, but, as far as we can, bring our bodies and minds to a state of tranquillity. Several particular motives conspire to make us condemn that imbecillity of soul, by which many, to their ignominy, have abandoned their parents, friends, and country, and, most commonly, have also undone themselves. Such a part can never be acted, but by the most abject of mankind. But the knowledge of what death is, according to a true conception of it, is alone sufficient to elevate all noble souls above its terror, and to cause timidity of any transient pain, which precedes or attends it, to cease. To *justice*, the same reasoning will apply. If, as has been shewn, the exercise of prudence, temperance, and fortitude, is so conjoined with the sentiment of pleasure, that the separation of them appears hardly conceivable, it may be presumed, that the virtue of justice can be understood to have estimation in no other sense but in that of a disposition pleasant and useful. Its prominent feature is to be injurious to none; but, on the contrary, to cherish always some affection or principle, which, in its nature or tendency, may compose the mind, or inspire the hope that extreme want can never be incurred by those in whom depraved nature does not prevail; and that, hence, any inducement or bias to injustice may be avoided. The circumstances

* Ex quo intelligitur, nec intemperantiam propter se fugiendam esse, temperantiamque expetendam, non quia voluptates fugiat, sed quia majores consequatur. Eodem fortitudinis ratio reperietur. Ibid.

circumstances attending its practice, calmly observed, become strikingly odious to the mind; and demonstrate, that, with it, inward tranquillity and peace can never dwell. However secretly managed, its public discovery is always to be dreaded; and, even where the power, or exorbitant wealth of some, may make them bid defiance to the indignation or assaults of others, yet, generally, their apprehensions are not altogether banished, but often haunt them in another form. They are apt to impute the agitation of their minds, or any remorse of their consciences, to the displeasure and wrath of the gods against them. To hazard incurring the least of these vexations, no person of a sound mind will be disposed; but he will be sensible of many inducements men have to the observance of justice; and that, whether in narrow or in affluent circumstances, much pleasure and satisfaction will redound from it to them.

Here may be introduced a more particular explication of justice, which we find stated by Diogenes Laertius, as conformable to Epicurus's conception of it, when considered by itself*; and, if the question was put, what idea could be entertained of it in the human mind, separately from its acknowledged benefit and utility in civil society? As it was a maxim in Epicurus's *Ethics*, that all good was naturally desirable, so, he said, that the desire of justice, when apprehended under the idea of good, was to be accounted natural to mankind. If combined together in civil society, for their general advantage, he allowed that a conception of it might be formed; but he denied that there was any thing implied in its idea, but what was relative to a political constitution. Without reference, therefore, to an agreement entered into by men in their associated state, justice was reckoned by him a mere name, and to be of no obligation. Hence, it took not place betwixt the human kind and irrational creatures, incapable of forming any such contract. Tribes, or nations of men, who did not become parties in a covenant, could not be reckoned to do injustice to one another, or to commit mutual wrongs. Amongst the members of the same community, justice is the equal distribution

* Ibid. in Epist. ad Menecaeum, in fine. Gassendus de vita, et moribus Epicuri; lib. 8. Sextus Empiricus Advers Mathem; lib. 8. pag. 331.

distribution both of a common and a particular good, supposed to be found in it; but the extent of the distribution, and the equality and exactness with which it is made, can only be in proportion to the wisdom of its constitution, and the due administration of its laws. No human policy is sufficient to provide against all mistakes; and the prescriptions of justice can never be, at once, adapted to the variable circumstances of civil society. Although, therefore, a member of the community may hold that only to be right and just which is useful and profitable to the whole body, and conclude, that any trespass upon this maxim is a breach of natural justice; yet, if wise and prudent, he will make allowances both for inevitable and undesigned errors in the established laws, especially as these last may be corrected; and, unless the known obstructions to public utility be insisted upon, instead of revoking from the society, he will be contented with that measure of justice which the policy of the state is calculated to produce; notwithstanding it may be, in several cases, rather the *symbol* and representation of a public good to the constituents, than what is equal to the conception of a complete utility. Such was Epicurus's descant upon justice, in which we may trace the grounds of all the arguments used by some modern authors, who contend, as that philosopher did, for its being no such moral principle as benevolence, temperance, or fortitude, the propensities to which may be found in man as an individual; while the sentiment of justice cannot occur to him, unless he be joined to a public community; and, therefore, all its obligations must be derived from his being placed in that condition.

To conclude the ethical part of this philosophy, it only remains to treat of friendship; upon which Epicurus pronounced the highest encomium, and with the more propriety, as the life he led with his friends might be quoted as a signal confirmation of its truth. Yet, his opponents alledged that friendship, in its true and genuine form, could not subsist amongst those who held pleasure to be the chief good, and its perception to be the object of all the desires of the soul*. According to this principle, said they, our own pleasures, and not those of our friends, must be first and chiefly desirable; and, therefore, the tie of friendship

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* Cicero, *ibid.* in fine.

can only be of the ungenerous and selfish kind, and sought after upon the sole view of its utility or convenience. To this objection several replies were made. First, it was said, that the sense of pleasure being attached to the exercise of all the virtues, it could not be otherwise in the case of friendship, which was calculated to receive, and to give the most abundant sensations of joy and delight; and that the pleasures of our friends, and our own, being inseparable, they became equal objects of our desires: And hence Epicurus made it an apothegm, that wise men would be affected in the same manner towards their friends as to themselves. But, if it was insisted upon, that, even in this view, the motive to friendship was not disinterested, but still arose from the selfish desire of pleasure, the objection might be removed, by considering, that although the first inducement to it was utility, yet, in its usage and habits, it might grow into the purest and most generous affection; so, towards certain objects that have, for a while, served for our amusement, we come to feel the attraction of love. Such sympathetic affection is conceived by us for animals with which we have been conversant, and for places that have been long our resort. How much more, then, may not the intimate correspondence, and the exchange of kind offices we hold with men, beget in us the feeling of benevolence, and the pure and cordial love of our select friends, without thought or consideration of the benefit resulting from our intercourse with them? Lastly, friendship may be more particularly regarded as a league amongst the wise, into which they alone are qualified to enter, on account of the harmonious agreement of their sentiments and manners. Where there is such a similarity of minds and dispositions, the confederacy may well be supported upon the recognised sentiment, that friends are induced to love one another no less than they do themselves. That this may ensue is not barely conceivable, but what is known to have taken place in the cordial association of the wise and the virtuous in several ages. But enough has been said to prove the general point, that, admitting pleasure to be the chief good, no impediment arises to the intervention of pure and unmercenary friendship, which constitutes a necessary part of that supreme good, and cannot be instituted or enjoyed without pleasure. Here, then, we finish the sketch of Epicurus's *Ethics*, without extending

tending it to many particular precepts founded upon the scheme of them. It may only be observed, that it was part of the general doctrine, that the virtues were connected with one another, prudence being a common bond to them all; and, likewise, because that principle itself had a conjoined influence with them upon a happy life. But their connection did by no means infer, as some philosophers assert, an equality either amongst them or the vices. As one man may be wiser, so he may be more virtuous than another; and he may also less excel in some particular virtue than in another*. The supposed equality of the vices is, yet, a more palpable and hideous contradiction to the common sense of mankind.

To the general scheme of the Epicurean morals, various remarks may belong; but the preceptive part of them must be allowed, in general, to be consonant to the soberest dictates of wisdom and virtue. It was not against the latter of these that either the Stoics, or any of the stricter sects, directed their objections; but the great disputation was about admitting Epicurus's general principle, that pleasure was the chief good; notwithstanding he placed the efficiency of that good in the moral virtues. It was an ancient position in the ethical philosophy, that pleasure, taken in its common acceptation for the indulgence of the desires, was adverse to virtue. But it was not supposed, either in Socrates's dissertations, or in the Platonic theory, or in that of Aristotle, that all pleasure was inconsistent with virtue. On the contrary, in the fable of the Judgment of Hercules, it has been mentioned, as part of the argument, that the pleasures of the senses, although not to be cherished, were best enjoyed when subjected to the rules of virtue†. Plato's distinctions of pleasure into the real and deceitful, the temperate and intemperate, the steady and inconstant, together with his other remarks, are philosophically accurate and just, and nearly equivalent to Epicurus's *Canonicæ*, except in estimating, in a much higher degree, the good arising from the pleasures of the mind, reason, and science. The Peripatetics ac-

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* ——— *Queis paria esse placuit peccata,*

Cum ventum ad verum est; sensus moresque repugnant,

Atque ipsa utilitas, iusti, prope mater, et æqui.—Hor.

† Vid. Part V. Sect. 4. pag. 201.

counted those arising from the corporeal senses a desirable good; but, in comparison with the former, of a secondary and more imperfect kind. There appeared, indeed, to be little or no debate amongst the philosophers, about admitting the corporeal pleasures to be, in a certain measure, ingredients in the requisite enjoyments of life, until Aristippus vented his false and pernicious theory, that the highest felicity was no more than the sum of all agreeable impressions made on the senses. He was opposed in this doctrine by the Cynics and Stoics; the latter of whom pronounced bodily pleasure to be only an accidental good, and pain to be no real evil.

Epicurus, a corporealist in *Physics*, and led, by his principles, to build much of any moral theory he might form upon the operation of the senses, could not easily avoid an approach to the theory of the Cyrenaic philosopher. As he placed the chief good of life in pleasure, and the greatest evil in pain, and held the sources of both, whether corporeal or mental, to be ultimately referable to the senses, Epicurus found, as has been observed, his explication of pleasure, restricted as it was to exemption from pain*, attacked, with very pointed arguments, by the Cyrenaics; who denied that pleasure could be felt in a state void of agreeable emotions; which, at most, could be conceived to be no more than a dull insensibility to pain or pleasure. The best reason that could be given why Epicurus advanced this controvertible tenet, was, that he could not throw off the corrupt and the licentious doctrine of the Cyrenaics in a more just and proper way, than by assigning a boundary to pleasure, and affirming, that, beyond the cessation of pain, and tranquillity consequent to it, there ensued no augmentation of delight. That he employed his principle to this moral purpose, is observable in several passages of the survey taken of his reasoning. It was used by him to condemn the excursions of the insatiable appetites and desires, not only as inconsistent with true pleasure, but as they were unauthorised by nature; which, upon due attention, would be found not to affect that which was boundless, but, by confining human felicity within a certain extent, to render it uniform, stable, and permanent.

This theory, however, was by no means reckoned just by Epicurus's opponents, who contended, that the abuses of the natural and moderate desires

* Vid. Part IV. Sect. 3. pag. 216.

desires of pleasures, could be no sufficient reason for restraining the energy of these of the virtuous kind; and that nature itself contradicted the assertion, that the height of pleasure consisted in the privation of pain, accompanied with tranquillity. It was confuted, they said, even from what was observable among the inferior creatures, who shewed themselves animated with more lively sensations of joy than what could arise from mere absence of pain *. Men, beside their rational faculties, being endowed with imagination and memory in a degree far superior to the animal tribes, were not disposed to rest in a dull immunity from pain, but were eagerly bent on the exertion of all their faculties, and found such pleasure in it, that the attending toil and labour proved generally a great augmentation of their joy. It must be owned, indeed, that much, or the most considerable part of men's satisfactions, arise from the trials and uses of their active powers. In the earlier stages of society, they are incessantly prompted, by their wants, to the exercise of them. In any period of life, their suspension causes languor; and when, with age, the ability fails, it is well if any recollection of past enjoyments can avail, to mitigate the inevitable dejection of the human mind.

It is evident that Epicurus could not explain in what manner that settled tranquillity, in which he placed supreme good, could be constituted upon his principles. It was not denied by him, but held as a fundamental doctrine, that the moderate pleasure of the senses consisted in their being moved in an exhilarating manner. But the bodily sensations, howsoever regulated, are of an importuning and restless kind, unless they be thrown into satiety; which is not the most agreeable condition. The commixture of them with the peaceful pleasures of the mind, was a strained union of two things, which cannot well be brought into concord; and yet, upon their supposed agreement, the maintenance of the Epicurean theory wholly depended. It was a proof that he held forth a most motely and defective scheme, when, after laying the foundation of all pleasure in the body, and declaring the judgment of what was pleasant or painful to be referable to the senses, he could make the latter no further accessory to felicity, than by their being unannoyed with pain, and then having recourse to the mind's tranquillity to establish and perfect its imaginary form. How could he suppose, that the

* Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem*.

best bodily constitution, with all possible attention paid to it, could be preserved altogether from some uneasy feeling for the space of a few days, much less of weeks or months? And, as for an equal and constant tranquillity of mind, it surely required to be produced upon principles and sentiments of a far more forcible influence than those suggested by Epicurus. No other *anodyne* of pain, or preservative of tranquillity, in the prospect of death, could he bring forth from the fund of his philosophy, than the remembrance of former pleasures, afforded from conversations with his disciples, and his own inventions, so much applauded by them *: Yet, it was his assertion, that, with such supports, his wise man might, in the midst of torments, exclaim, *how sweet is the recollection of past joys?*

It may appear strange, that the disparity of their principles did not hinder two such opposite theorists in philosophy, as Epicurus and Zeno, to coincide nearly with each other, in a doctrine the hardest of any imaginable in practice. But, it is to be considered, that, in the philosophy of every sect, a measure of knowledge, or of virtue, of the utmost consequence in human life, was held to be attainable. According to the Stoics, it was an intrepid and invincible constancy of soul, which defied all assaults of pain or perturbation. Amongst the Epicureans, it was a calm and undisturbed tranquillity of mind, that, although averse to suffering pain, could yet endure it, when inevitable, with courage: And, with the Sceptics, it was an indifference with respect to all opinions, and unconcern about all accidents in life. By what means the human constitution might be thrown into these attitudes, was to be learned from the detail of their moral theories. In them, it must be allowed, there was a great difference as to their conceivable efficacy. But, when Epicurus so highly exalted the influence of his principles, we must either suppose that enthusiasm may arise from the barest grounds; or, that such a temperament of the soul, as he alledged to be communicable to his wise man, must have proceeded more from nature, than from philosophic instruction.

Beside

* Cicero puts this assertion of Epicurus in a yet more extravagant and ridiculous light. Epicurus, vero, ea dicit, ut mihi quidem risus captare videatur; affirmat enim quodam loco, si uratur sapiens, si crucietur,—dicet, Quam suave est hoc, quam hoc non curo?—Tuscul. Quaest. lib. 2. pag. 132.

Beside throwing off any notion of man's dignity, as he participates of a rational nature, and is an agent in that sphere, Epicurus did not admit any sentiment of virtue, as, in itself, an object lovely and desirable to the human mind. The epithets applied to it by other philosophers, of beautiful and graceful, of noble and becoming, he rejected as words of empty sound. He contended, as has been shown, that any virtuous action had no other charm beyond the pleasure and benefit found in its performance. Yet, in every community of mankind, it appears, that some mental object has always been regarded as a noble and dignified one in itself, without the benefit or advantage attending it being considered. In the rude state of human society, the attraction to it may be hardly distinguishable from the indiscriminate display of man's active powers; and, often, to exhibit as much the energy of his passions, as his direct sense of a virtuous principle; yet, it has been generally found to be connected with the image of virtue, and to imply the approbation of what is really praise worthy. Although the object may be narrow, and chiefly respective of the defence or credit of the small society to which he belongs, it proves that man, associated with his kind, is immediately carried beyond his selfish concerns. In his earliest age, he begins to act for the service of those with whom he is connected, and delights in nothing so much as employing his feeble strength to that purpose. Gradually sensible of the value of his faculties, that are useful to others, and to the praise that follows the exercise of them, he cherishes an obliging disposition, until, by its becoming habitual to him, he performs the most generous and laudable actions. The sense of the public good appearing most venerable in his eyes, his private affections are controuled by it, and the moral virtues embraced with ardor. To be brave in public danger; to be industrious in studying the arts of peace; and to be prudent, temperate, and humane, in the conduct and manners of common life; are dispositions that suit the temperament of his soul, and he exults in exerting them, as the sure and only guardians of the general good.

These traits of the human character are not assumed from any fictitious picture: They are no more than what many of the founders of states, and the legislators and patriots, in the primitive ages of the world,

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are known to have exhibited. It may be truly said of them, that they knew not what it was to act from the motive of particular good, or benefit to themselves; when they triumphed in war, and yet were not led, by pride or ambition, to lift their heads above their fellow citizens, or to extend their desires of the private enjoyments of life beyond the sober requisitions of nature. Some of them chose to retire from public action, lest it should be apprehended, that their influence in the state might trespass upon the equality of its members. Others refused superior authority, when offered them. There were those, also, who, after framing a body of laws for their country, and obtaining their institution by the public suffrage, and with a solemn engagement for their being observed, betook themselves to a voluntary exile, and resigned all participation of the good they had communicated to others, and of the happy effects of that form of government, which it was their greatest glory to have devised. But, it may be asked, are these noble examples of disinterested and virtuous affection to be found only in the first stages of civil society? To this, it may be answered, that they shine forth, then, in their true colours, and genuine lustre; and from obvious reasons.

When governments include many cities, and great multitudes of men, the public good becomes a distant and complicated object; intelligible only, and capable of being attended to, but by a certain number of the community. To the generality, the view of it is lost, and the sense of acting with a regard to it, is almost extinguished. Guardians are hired, with the honours and emoluments of the state, to watch over its interest; and every one thinks he has a title to be hired for any exertion he makes in its behalf. The disposition found amongst the virtuous few to act a noble and a generous part, being deprived of its object, languishes, or is contracted within the narrow bounds of a family good, or a party interest. With warm inclinations, and eminent abilities, to advance the public welfare, the patriot disappears; or is only visible in the characters of a worthy father, an agreeable associate, and a cordial and disinterested friend. The rectitude and honesty of his views, the firmness of his mind, and the humanity and generosity of his schemes, that are distinguishable in any public scene, prove the principles of the
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most exalted virtue to be alive in his breast; but under disadvantages for their exertion, from their being generally disregarded. The indulged operation of the mean and ignoble passions having now produced its effect, men's minds are averse to any other impressions but such as coincide with the love of pleasure, or private good; and the maxim of Epicurus's school is the predominant one with them, *that the wise man does all things for his own sake*; as if he had neither from nature, nor from a sentiment of what was becoming him, any disposition to the practice of the virtues, or ought to trouble himself about them, unless from the inducement of the private advantage they procure. Yet, most men would be ashamed to declare, that they found in themselves little or no propensity to the love of society, to compassion, to friendship, to gratitude, to equity, to fidelity, and to constancy of mind, or character; but according as they apprehended these qualities to advance their particular interest.

Beside the influence of the social affections, which transcend all selfish concerns, and carry men directly to their objects, there are other principles in the human constitution that operate much in the same manner. The human mind itself, naturally, forms a sentiment of what is decent and honourable in deportment and behaviour. Actions are done, for no other reason but because they appear fit and worthy of us, as men; who, from observing what is beautiful or deformed in external objects, readily transfer these perceptions to the manners and conduct of human life. Order and regularity in them are approved; and a sense of character, from a conformity to a moral rule, is produced; and, together with it, the desire of honest fame. In the progress of civil society, men's natural thirst of knowledge is increased, and extended to the invention and improvement of all useful and beneficent arts. They launch forth into the more speculative sciences, for the sake of contemplating truth, simply, and in its abstract forms. Any theory, therefore, which, like that of Epicurus, would resolve all the energies and principles of the human constitution into a desire of pleasure, must be accounted altogether erroneous and defective*. We are, surely, says Cicero, in the conclusion of his argument with Torquatus, destined for some higher and nobler purpose, than that of having pleasure for our main object in
life;

* De Finib. Bonor. et Malor. lib. 2. pag. 70.

life; endowed as we are not only with memories, retentive of numberless things, but with a sagacity that foresees and anticipates the consequences of actions, to a degree of certainty that differs little from divination. Modesty, likewise, and a sense of shame, restrain our inordinate affections; and, beside the sense of justice, which forms the band of human society, an invincible patience and resolution is testified, in enduring toils, and encountering dangers; so that pain and death appear contemptible to us. Even our bodily ability for action avails to corroborate the vigour of our minds; and any one who has the least of a manly spirit, submits not easily to have that diffusion of pleasure thro' all the senses, which, enervating nature, depresses and stupifies the soul; and yet this must be understood to be the state contended for by Epicurus, as the perfection of human felicity. Hence it appears, why, amongst all the arts cultivated among men as praise worthy, the study of pleasure has not obtained an honourable name; and, although favoured in the songs of the looser poets, it is not what Homer, Archilochus, or Pindar, have extolled in their heroes; nor has it ever raised an honourable monument, or furnished a laudible inscription, to the memory of any of its professed votaries.

In concluding the remarks upon Epicurus's ethical theory, it may be observed, in general, that it coincides more with the selfish than the benevolent scheme of morals. It holds forth the desire of pleasure to be so much the predominant affection of human nature, that the indication given of any more generous motive, is to be considered as only a modified species of self-love. The theory, taken up in this view, although not explicitly stated by Epicurus, gave occasion to some disputation among the ancient philosophers, whether the human heart was disposed to pure benevolence? but the question has served more to perplex the investigation of the modern theorists in morals. How men, allowing them to be possessed of disinterested affections, can exercise them without pleasing themselves, became a stumbling point in the controversy, and appeared to defy metaphysical refinement to resolve it. The argument proceeded, as if self-love and benevolence were inconsistent principles; and that it was necessary to adopt the one or the other in any just theory of the human mind. After various disquisitions of this kind,

a conjunction of the two was held forth; and sympathetic affection represented to be the best explication of the energies of both. The scheme, also, has undergone some modifications, which brought it nearer to the original one of Epicurus, by considering the virtues of the human mind under the predicaments of being agreeable perceptions to ourselves and others, and likewise as utilities of the same import. Hardly could more invention and ingenious argument be thrown together, in support of any hypothesis, than what is displayed upon these assumed principles of morality. But perceptions of what is agreeable or pleasant in objects, denote qualities in them too general and indefinite to reach the proper delineation of the virtues, and distinguish them sufficiently from the vices; more especially when the bodily endowments, and those of the mind, are ranked together as of equal estimation. Knowledge, wit, courage, assiduity, or dexterity in business, are both agreeable and useful qualities; but, if improperly employed, they cannot have the denomination or value of moral virtues. The estimate, therefore, of moral principles by such characteristics, must be, at least, an imperfect one. But, although in the display of the ancient systems of philosophy, we still strike the ground of some modern theory, our remarks here cannot be extended to particular discussions. After so lengthened an exposition of Epicurus's philosophy, we come now to exhibit the postponed one of Zeno and the Stoics, whose eminent fame was hardly equalled by any of the Grecian sects.

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* Serdas, in voce Nov. Credo de Elpidio, lb. 4. Mag. Laurent. lib. 2. p. 309.
Grado, lb. 14. + Serdas de Transfiguratio Anni, tom. 2. fol. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912.

P A R T IX.

S E C T I O N I.

The Porch, or Stoical School instituted by Zeno.—His Character and Manners; and the Fame of his School.—His Successors in it, of eminent reputation.

CIT IUM, a small Greek town in the island of Cyprus, but chiefly inhabited by the Phoenicians, was the place of Zeno's nativity *. Hence the appellation of Citieus, Phoenicus, and that of *Paenulus*, by Cicero, were given him. His father's trade of merchandize had occasioned his visiting Athens: Whether after his first or second voyage, an accident is said to have happened to the ship, which being wrecked in the entrance to the harbour, his whole fortune was lost with it. His dejection had carried him to the shop of a bookseller; where, finding one of Xenophon's pieces, he was captivated with the reading of it; and asked where those men called Philosophers were to be met with? "There goes one of them," said his associate; while he pointed to Crates, the *Cynic*, as he passed by. He immediately resolved to be his follower †. "It is well done of fortune," said he, "for now I shall have no con-
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* Suidas, in voce *Zeno*. Cicero de Finibus, lib. 4. Diog. Laert. lib. 7. p. 369. Strabo, lib. 14. † Seneca de Tranquillitate Animi, tom. 2. pag. 327. Plutarch, de Tranquillitate.

cerns but about my cloke and philosophy." It appears probable, however, that this was not his first acquaintance with the writings of the philosophers; as the story is differently told, and his father is said to have bought, and carried home to him, some books of the *Socratics*. Attached as he became to Crates, no course taken with him availed to vanquish his natural modesty, and give him a dash of the Cynic impudence. His first literary production, *de Republica*, was alledged to have some taints of Cynicism; and said, ironically, to be wrote *under the tail of the Dog*. He soon turned to other instructors in philosophy; and, after hearing Stilpo for several years, he became Polemo's disciple, along with Arcefilas. Surpassing the latter in age and erudition, he distinguished himself, above all his disciples, by many subtile disputations. The import of these maintained against Arcefilas have been mentioned. Polemo saw that he would not acquiesce in the doctrine of the Academy; and said, *that he only meant to convert it to his own profit, after the manner of the Phoenicians*.

Instructed in the tenets of the more ancient philosophers, and conversant in the debated opinions of his own time, he instituted a school in Athens, first called the Zenonian, but soon celebrated under the name of the *Porch*, where it convened*; and which was distinguished from other such *fabrics*, by a variety of pictures hung up in it; several of them the works of Polygnotus, Mycon, and Pandaenus, Phidias's brother, and other famous artists. The concourse of disciples to the *Stoical* school was great, on account of the reputation of its founder. Constant in study, indefatigable in the exercise of his abilities, his manner of life exemplified temperance, and moderation in all his desires, approaching to severity; but which offended not by any Cynic disregard of modesty and *decorum*. Although a stranger to the Grecian conviviality, he was not unsocial, unless when threatened with a number of companions. When the populace flocked around him in his walks, he dispersed them by some distributions of money; with respect to which he testified the greatest indifference; and a disdain, if it was offered to him by the rich, as an acceptable gratuity. "In case you need any thing," said Democharis,

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* Pausanias Atticis, lib. 1. pag. 27.—30.

charis, saluting him, "I shall write to Antigonus, who will immediately supply your wants." Zeno made no reply; but was observed, ever after, to decline conversing with him. His correspondence, however, with the King of Macedonia was honourable for both, on account of the regard shown by the monarch to a man of his character, and the proper acknowledgment of the honour done him by the philosopher, although he complied not with the generous request made to him *. He went frequently to sup with Antigonus, when he came to Athens; and their friendship continued until Zeno's death; when the King expressed his regret in terms that signified how much he had been struck with the leading features of his character, equanimity and constancy. "What a surprising spectacle of a man have I lost!" said he, "my admiration of him was more especially excited, by observing that all the honours I could do him, or the benefits I offered, had no effect, either in changing his behaviour to pride, or to the affectation of more humility."

He was of a dark complexion, and rather morose in his aspect; and, slender as he was in his make, he wore only, beside his cloke, a thin *tunic* †; which some said, was but a slight remove from the nakedness of the Cynic. Abstemious, and frugal in his diet, and contenting himself, chiefly, with vegetable food, he lived to a great age, with a consistency of manners that appeared to restrain man's natural, as well as his extravagant affections; yet Laertius adds, rather with a note of surprise, *his life was that of great felicity*. In the opinion of the Athenians, he sustained the character of a philosopher, with propriety, and singular advantage to the morals of the youth; which needed the correction his philosophy prescribed ‡. From the public estimation of his virtuous principles, and upright conduct, the keys of the city were often deposited at his house, as the safest custody. At his death, a decree passed for erecting,

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.*

† Hence the adversaries of his sect alledged, that the *tunic* made all the difference there was betwixt it and the *Cynics*;—according to the lines of the poet,

Et qui nec Cynicos, nec Stoica dogmata curat,

A Cynicis, *tunica* distantia.—Juven. Sat. 13.

‡ *Ibid.*

erecting, at the public charge, a sepulchral monument to him in the *Ceramicus*. His lengthened years were reckoned to exceed ninety; and his attendance upon his school comprehended more than fifty of them. Infirmary causing him to fall, as he came from his auditory, he broke a finger. Striking the ground with his hand, he expressed himself, as *Niobe* did in the tragedy, "*I come, why do you push me?*" It was against his philosophy *to be driven to his exit*; or that it should not be in him the act of his will, concurring with nature: He therefore resolved to live no longer, lest he might incur another surprise; and either by starving, or strangling himself, put an end to his life. The time of his flourishing was about the 120th Olympiad; so that, having anticipated the Epicurean philosophy, then only beginning to be known, we must look back at least thirty years in chronology, to keep in our view the progress of philosophy in the schools.

Zeno appeared at a period when the disputes in the Platonic Academy, encouraged by Arcefilas, set its disciples at variance about their tenets, and spread amongst them the seeds of unlimited scepticism. In these contests, Zeno played the dialectician with signal applause; and became the more enamoured of the art, in which he was acknowledged to excel his rivals. It has been often remarked, how blindly idolised the faculty of disputation was amongst the Greeks; and the value of philosophy, and the merit of philosophers, estimated by superiority in it. Although the Dialectic was not properly reckoned a part of philosophy, it was allowed to hold the reins in every discussion; and was, in a great degree, rendered itself systematic, before Aristotle's syllogistical rules came to light. Zeno studied to perfect it, not so much by rules, as by frivolous distinctions, and the coinage of new words. In these, says Cicero *, he was an architect and innovator; while in things themselves he hardly discovered his invention; but rather treated what others had advanced before in his own peculiar stile. He was followed close in this

* Quamquam ex omnibus philosophis, Stoici, plurima (verba) neminaverunt. Zeno quoque, eorum princeps, non tam rerum inventor fuit, quem novorum verborum; De Finib. lib. 3. Advena quidem, et ignobilis verborum opifex; Tuscul. Quæst. Stoicorum autem non ignoras quam sit subtile, vel spinosum potius, discedendi genus; De Finib. ibid.

this tract by the disciples of his school; so that, in the dialectic, a phraseology obscure, which had often no more meaning than propriety, and in the moral part of their philosophy, various paradoxical sentences, appeared more to darken and perplex its study, than to recommend it: Yet, from the admiration that always followed the delusion of the logical art, and from the high strain of moral virtue it held forth, there was no sect that rose to more general reputation. Further to characterise its principles, would only anticipate what will be better understood from their detail. We shall only observe, that Zeno's revolt from the *Cynosarges* did not imply his abandoning the principles of that school. Those he maintained relative to the practice of virtue, were, materially, the same with the sketch that has been given of *Antisthenes's* tenets, which laid the foundation of the Cynic sect. The indecencies of the latter were corrected by him; and its uncouth precepts delivered in a smoother form. The Stoics, however, were often put in mind, by their adversaries, of their original, and their near affinity to the Cynics; which Zeno owned, and did not consider as any reproach. His treatise of a *Republic*, although it contained some singular institutions, and tended to discredit that of Plato, was held in much esteem. One doctrine recited by Plutarch *, was much insisted upon in it. "Men," it was affirmed, "ought not to be ranged in divisions, by separate cities and towns, and under distinct laws, but live and unite, upon the more humane and liberal principle, that they were all of the same country, and citizenship; and that, as a flock of the same fold, no other than one order of life and manners should be instituted amongst them; and the right of common pasture the only one claimed." We shall afterwards see in what sense a position, similar to this very extraordinary one, was admitted into the moral system. Laertius has enumerated Zeno's other works, with the commendation, that none of his sect excelled him in philosophic discourses. He had, however, many able and distinguished followers.

Of these, to be now particularly mentioned, the two principal were Cleanthes and Chrysippus, who succeeded Zeno in the *Porch*. The first

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* De Fortitudine Alex. Mag.

was a native of Affus in Lycia, but so poor as to be of no occupation, except what his bodily strength enabled him to follow, for his sustenance. A wrestler in his own country, he took his course to Athens, in the condition of one who offered himself to any labour *. When he sought employment from Crates, all his stock was four *drachmas*; but he undertook work in the night, to be at liberty to attend the Cynic through the day. He next followed the students who went to hear Zeno, and gave such attendance as he could in the Porch, without being disturbed; until a summons was given him, from the magistracy, to declare how he, who looked so healthful and robust, subsisted himself without employment. He repelled the penal indictment, by proving, testimonially, that, at one time, he drew water for a gardener; and, at another, he wrought for hire at the corn mill; and, by such labour, in the hours of night, he gained what was sufficient to maintain him, without working through the day. His painful industry, especially when the motive to it was considered, excited admiration; and a gift of ten *minae* was ordered to be made him; but Zeno advised him not to accept it. He wished to show, from his example, how independency might be attained, in the lowest condition of life, by honest labour; and that what Cleanthes had in that way performed was a reproach to those, who, although no such exertion was required of them, and all convenience of time was their own, employed it, not as they ought, either in profitable labour, or in suitable study. At his request, Cleanthes brought him an *obolus*, as what he could easily spare, daily, from his maintenance. A purse of the savings being made, Zeno, in a short time, produced it at the *Porch*. "Behold," said he to the students, "What you will hardly believe: Cleanthes is not only able to live, but this sum he has gained is a testimony, that he could support another such as himself. He also finds time to study philosophy: Yet how many are there, who not being in want of necessaries, would not decline a better subsistence at other people's expence; and some students of philosophy there appear to be, who discover not half his desire of knowledge, or spare half the time that he does to acquire it."

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* Diogen. Laert. lib. 7.

There is no reasonable aim which may not, in some measure, be attained by assiduity and patience. Cleanthes, unfurnished with tablets, wrote notes of Zeno's lectures upon shells and bones. Of a slow capacity, and as he appeared, in comparison with the other students, naturally dull, he was called the *Ass* amongst them; as Xenocrates had been, when matched with Aristotle in the academy of Plato. "If I be so," said he, "I only bear Zeno's burthen." He proceeded, however, in his course with so much attention and pains, that nothing in that philosopher's theory appeared to have escaped him; and Zeno gave the most ample attestation to his perfect comprehension of the principles of his system. The impression the marked virtue of his character made upon all, contributed, as much as his surprising advancement in knowledge, to raise him high in the public esteem. After nineteen years of attendance upon Zeno, none was accounted more worthy to succeed him in the Porch. He filled that place with great ability; and his publications, which were more numerous than those of Zeno, hardly fell short of equal approbation *. Hence the encomiastic title of *Father of the Stoics*, and other similar epithets, are, by Cicero, affixed to his name. Simplicius, in his Commentaries upon Epictetus †, has mentioned his seeing a fine statue of him, erected long after his time, in *Affus*; at the request, as it would appear, of the citizens, and by the magnificent generosity of the Roman Senate. The monument of him, and the only one from the original, transmitted to us, is of a nobler kind than any of brass or marble; and, as it has done, will survive many a *metallic* effigy. It is his celebrated, and often quoted, hymn to the supreme God, or *Jupiter*, known to men under various names. Amongst his other works, Laertius mentions one of *Fabulous Traditions*. The explication of these, called *Archaeologies*, or antiquities of proper names, was made, by the Stoics, an appendage to their Physical system. Cleanthes died much in the same manner, and, as Lucian reports ‡, nearly at the same advanced age, as Zeno. Finding an ulcerous swelling under his tongue, he fasted two days, by the advice of his physicians, as a remedy for it. Upon appearance of suc-

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* Academ. Quaest.

† Comment. in Enchirid. cap. ult.

‡ Dialog. de Longaevis.

cess in the cure, he was desired to take meat, but in vain. "I have got," said he, "so far in the way to my exit, that I think it now unfit to turn back." By continuing to fast two days longer, he expired. As he dissented in nothing from Zeno, so he appeared to follow his example in death.

Chrysippus, who, more properly, may be said to have been Cleanthes's hearer than his disciple, was successor to him in the Stoical school. He studied under several other philosophers; but he was of a genius not to be curbed by authority, or unhinged by attachment. A natural and first born son of the logical art, he held no opinions but what he thought might be traced out by it; and believed himself capable of discovering all its shelves and depths. "Give me only the topics," said he, "and I shall find the proofs *." The acuteness of his genius, the extent of his imagination, and his general erudition, were acknowledged; but his presumption was still superior to these qualifications. His treatises of the Dialectic, which were vastly numerous, if those of Aristotle had been lost, would probably have long been the chief food of the schools; and, notwithstanding Epicurus's *Canonics*, they had, for a considerable time, an extensive credit and fame. It was said, that, without him, the *Porch* could not have stood; and he may be allowed, in respect of his logical aid, to have been to it a sort of *key-stone*. For, although he differed from Zeno and Cleanthes in various points, yet, as intricate disputation of every kind was his delight, he took up the controversy in behalf of their system, where it appeared to be most exceptionable or extravagant †. He even made it part of his glory, in debate, to show that he understood how to manage an argument better than those had done, who either maintained or controverted it. His arrogance, in this way, often carried him into absurd and contradictory assertions. In the ostentation of his ingenuity, he furnished Carneades, as Cicero observes, with weapons against

* Diogen. Laert. lib. 7. pag. 478. Cicero de Natur. Deor. lib. 2.; et Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.—Per multa alia colligit Chrysippus, ut est in omni historia curiosus.

† Jam vero Chrysippus, qui Stoicorum somniorum vaferrimus habetur interpres. Cicero de Nat. Deor. ibid. pag. 201.—Chrysippus, dum studiose omnia conquestivit contra sensus et perspicuitatem, &c. ipsum sibi respondentem, inferiorem se fuisse, et armatum ab eo esse Carneadem.

against himself. The side of the question he supported, was frequently found to lose more than it gained by his ambiguities. The Stoics of his time derived, indeed, some present advantage from the logical dust he raised in their defence. They assumed his dialectic into their philosophy; but they became sensible of its futility. He was alledged to have rather misrepresented several of their tenets, than illustrated them *. Seneca complains of his subtilising to such a degree, as to invalidate his own arguments; and Arrian and Epictetus speak of him with little respect. He wrote upwards of seven hundred volumes; of which almost the one half was upon Logics. In the *farrago* of his works, every thing might be found; but much quoted from other authors, and much of his own repeated, but little treated with sufficient accuracy. To recite some of his dialectical arguments, although thought brilliant, hardly would afford entertainment. His most memorable one is that, in which he endeavoured to prove the Stoical doctrine of *fate*, or necessity, to be reconcilable with human liberty; but the account of it will be more properly introduced in the conclusion of the dialectics of this philosophy.

He was a native of Soli, a town in Cilicia; but, his father having emigrated from Tarsis, he is, by some authors, denominated from that place. In private life, the incidents related of him are inconsiderable. His morals were without reproach. He lived in privacy, and in the soberest manner. To surpass all his predecessors in voluminous writing, seemed to be his chief ambition and employment, and also his foible. When, in Cleanthes's regency, Ptolemy Philopater requested to have one of his disciples sent to his court, Sphaerus accepted the mission, when Chrysippus declined it. He dedicated none of his books to princes, although many of them, as we see from Laertius's catalogue, were inscribed to literary men, or particular friends. The manner of his death is differently related. He is said to have died either of a draught

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* Eum (Chrysippum) in ordinem cogere audeo; magnum virum, sed tamen Graecum, cujus acumen *nimis tenue* retunditur, et in se saepe replicatur. Etiam cum agere aliquid videtur, pungit, non perforat. De Beneficiis, cap. 4.—Cicero's account of his embarrassment, with the sophism of the *Scrites*, is curious. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4.

of wine, taken after some sacrifice, or of an excessive fit of laughter upon seeing an ass eat figs. At the age of eighty, or, at the lowest computation, of seventy-three, a slight disorder might have occasioned it. Athens honoured him with a statue in the *Ceramicus*. His death ensued, according to Apollodorus, in the 143d Olympiad.

Having, for brevity's sake, omitted to mention Persæus, Herillus, Aristo Chius, Dionysius Heracleotes, and others, who were Zeno's immediate disciples, together with Cleanthes, so we bring not into particular view the appearances made, as philosophers of the Porch, by Zeno Sidonius, Diogenes Babylonius, already mentioned as one of the three philosophers sent from Athens on an embassy to Rome, and Antipater, also said to have been of Sidon, who were bred in Chrysippus's school, and had eminent reputation. In still a later period, Panaetius and Posidonius flourished; of whom the one lived near, and the other in, Cicero's time; and to whose ingenuity and erudition he gives the highest commendation *. It is enough to ascertain the worth and merit of the first, that we know he lived in domestic intimacy and friendship with Scipio and Laelius. "Our history tells us," says the Roman Academic, "that Scipio Africanus †, going as ambassador to the Kings of that continent whence he took his honourable name, carried along with him but one companion, Panaetius the Stoic." Cicero, for some time, attended the philosophical lectures of the second at Rhodes; and, amongst other testimonies to his scientific knowledge, he mentions his having made a sphere ‡, constructed so artificially as to represent the conversions of the sun and the moon, and the five planets, exactly as they took place every day and night in the heavens. Although a native of Apamea in Syria, he not only held a public school of philosophy in Rhodes, but had a share in the civil government of the city §. The honour done him by Pompey, then returning from his Asiatic victories §, that got him the surname

* Panaetius, princeps, meo quidem judicio, prope Stoicorum. Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. Homo in primis ingenuus et gravis; dignus illa familiaritate Scipionis et Laelii. De Fin. lib. 4.

† Accad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 11.

‡ De Natur. Deor. lib. 2. pag. 227.

§ Strabo, lib. 16.

§ Cicero Tusc. Quaest. lib. 3. pag. 146. Plin.

Hist. Natur. lib. 7. cap. 30.

urname of *the Great*, is generally known from the narratives of Cicero and Pliny. The Roman general had turned out of his way, to have the pleasure of hearing him discourse. When arrived at his gate, he forbid the door to be struck, as usual, by the Lictor, or the Consular fasces to be carried before him. Finding Posidonius fixed to his bed, from violent pains of the gout, he was on the point of departing, after expressing his concern for his indisposition: But the philosopher would not allow him to go, without being, in some measure, gratified in what he understood was desirable to him. In distress as he was, Posidonius made his utmost effort to discuss the Stoical topic, *that nothing was good, but what was honest*. His discourse was frequently interrupted by fits of severe pain; but, instead of desisting, and owning himself vanquished by it, he only exclaimed, "O! Pain, thou art troublesome, but it is to no purpose; for I will not confess thee to be an evil." Besides these, there were some others that might be added to the list of the eminent disciples of the Porch, prior to the Augustan age; but as, in treating the Stoical philosophy, notice must be taken of some of those already named, who dissented in particular points from Zeno's doctrine, we shall here mark a new Section, that will be introduced with an account of the Dialectical or preliminary part of Zeno's philosophy, and conclude with his *Physics* and *Theology*.

SECTION II.

Zeno's division of Philosophy.—The Dialectical part.—Human perceptions, and associations of Ideas.—Stoical doctrine of Fate and Necessity.—Opinions of ancient Philosophers upon the subject.—Chrysippus's argumentation.—Reasonings of ancient and modern authors on Liberty and Necessity.—General principles of Physics and Theology, according to the theories of the Stoics.

ZENO divided philosophy into Logics, Physics, and Ethics; but some of his earliest followers inverted this order*; and others of them made the division a most complex one. Its parts were called *places*; which might, metaphorically, be considered as *genera* and *species*. It was thought, that, with propriety enough, philosophy might be compared to an *animal*; in which Physics formed the blood and flesh, Logic the bones, and Ethics the soul†; or to an *egg*, consisting of the shell, and its contents; or to a *planted field*; Logics corresponding to the hedge, Physics to the trees, or ground, and Ethics to the fruit. They were, however, mostly agreed in dividing Logics, or, as it was called, *the rational part of Philosophy*, into two branches, the Rhetorical and the Dialectical.

* Diog. Laert. lib. 7. pag. 389—90. Their division of Physics was general and special. The first comprehended the world, the elements, and causes; and the other, bodies, principles, distinguished from elements, gods, prodigies, place, and space and *vacuum*.

† Sextus Empir. Advers. Mathem. lib. 7. Cicero de Legib. lib. 1.

Dialectical. The first was defined to be the art of good elocution, upon such subjects as require oratory of the more diffusive kind; and the second, that of right disputation upon any point, by close question and answer. Hence it was called, *the science of what is true, or false, or neutral* *. The subdivision of the former comprehended invention, phraseology, arrangement, and action; and, in every example given of it, an exordium, narration, confutation, and epilogue, was to be included.

Common to both arts are voice, speech, and words; but the Dialectic, entering into a definition of each of these, distinguished them, although conjoined, into the thing *signifying*, and that which was signified, and the contingent; which differ, as voice does from what is announced by it, and apprehended in the mind; and the man who speaks from these, and from another person †. The voice of man is *articulate*, and his diction has literal sounds. These, signifying the notions of the mind, form words, or speech; which, as it conveys some rational perception, has, previous to its utterance, what may be called a *dicible* (*λεκτον*); and that, whether true or false, must have such congruity, in itself, as may be announced in words. Thus, we understand the expression, when it is said, *it is day*; although the affirmation should be disproved. Yet the *dicible* may be imperfect from a deficiency in the annunciation; as when *writeth* is only uttered; for the supply of which, *categorems*, or predicaments, are used. It is requisite, that whatever is said should be spoken of some person, or thing. The perfect *dicibles* become the subject of axioms, or first principles, and prepositions, and syllogisms.

The *syllogism* was reckoned the most important part of the Dialectic, as it afforded demonstrative proof; and contributed much to the rectification of *dogmas* ‡, or common opinions; and, assisting memory by order and method, rendered comprehension not only easy, but fixed and abiding. Discourse is a collection of notions and inferences. Syllogism is a form of rational argument with respect to these; and demonstration, which is the syllogistic conclusion, arises, when, by the *medium* of a thing known, or allowed to be so, a just inference is made of another

* Sextus Empir. *ibid.* lib. 2.
pag. 382.

† Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 405.

‡ *Ibid.*

other truth, not known, or less evident. The Dialectical art was, therefore, strangely said to be a virtue in *species* *, containing in it other virtues; and its study was held to be absolutely necessary for avoiding rash and erroneous assent, distinguishing the probable and improbable in argument, and reprobating frivolous and sophistical ratiocination; and, in general, for acquiring that habit of judging betwixt truth and falsehood, by which sound and indubitable comprehension is constituted. Without it, even the wise man, it was said, might be deficient in acuteness of perception, and be unable to hold accurate discourse about his axioms, or to justify them, when either mistaken, or wilfully perverted.

By no other sect of philosophers was the rhetorical art treated with such minute attention to words, speech, grammar, and syntax, and other parts of oratorical composition, as by the Stoics. Although there is some reason for adopting Cicero's censure of them, for being inventors of new terms, and chiefly verbal critics; yet it seems probable, that what he himself has delivered upon the elements of language, and propriety of diction, and even much of the same kind, that adorns the critical page of Dionysius Halicarnassus, was collected from the various books of the Stoics upon these subjects, which were considered as parts of philosophy. Upon the observation of Brutus, that few of the Stoics were orators, Cicero remarks, that their attachment to the subtleties of the Dialectic had disqualified most, or all, of their school, from being either good pleaders at the bar, or very eloquent †; and that he knew none of them in his time, except Brutus himself, and his uncle, Cato of Utica, who had learned Rhetoric with other masters, that made a distinguished appearance in oratory. But, if their Dialectic thus spoiled them as orators, it must be owned, as has been observed, that it did not make them shine, in the degree they imagined, as disquisitive philosophers. They had a logical system of their own, which was far from the exactness of the Aristotelian theory. Their syllogisms were not precise

* Cicero, Acad. Quaest. lib. 4.
pag. 219.

† Cicero, in Bruto, seu de Clar. Orat.

At ego, inquam, Brute, non sine causa; propterea quod istorum in dialecticis omnis cura consumitur, &c.

cise in their forms *; and, when they scattered them about profusely, especially in their moral reasonings, it was evident, upon the least examination, that they had often only a verbal, or apparent coherence, instead of exhibiting real, and connected ideas of things. But these fallacious uses of the dialectic were not so much imputed to Zeno as to Chrysippus, and others who followed him in the Stoical school; and, as has been said, they, in time, became despicable amongst the intelligent of the sect.

Amongst the questions in philosophy, the one which respects human perceptions of objects by the senses, and next to it, the internal judgment of them as true or false, has always proved of difficult solution. The analysis of the first of these, as attempted upon physical principles, may yet be reckoned one of the obscure, or halting places of science: Yet the Stoics, who were corporealists, had their theory about it; and thought perception sufficiently explained, by considering it to be the simple effect of the action, or intrusion of external objects upon the senses; whence, said Zeno †, was produced a form or *phantasm* of them in the mind, which was called the *hegemonic*, or leading principle of the soul. But Chrysippus conceived this notion to be rather absurd, as it implied, either that the mind, in having the conjunct phantasms of a square and a triangle, received two different impressions at the same time; or else, which is no less repugnant, that when these, or other such conceptions, are joined together, as is often the case, the soul itself assumed a diversity of forms. He therefore insisted that Zeno meant to say, that, from the impulse of the senses, the soul underwent, not what is commonly understood by an impression, but what is signified by the more general word *alteration*. Thus, said he, the air is altered by various percussions upon it; while, yet, no stamp or signature of them is supposed to take place in its parts. This deviation by Chrysippus,

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* They had several forms; but these were not always observed; and they consisted, generally, of a single proposition; but, instead of *one middle term*, one, two, or more assumptions were admitted into them, and the inference from them was the same. Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 392.

† Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 393. Sext. Empir. lib. 4.; et Cicero Acad. Quæst. *ibid.*

from Zeno's doctrine of perception, shows how apparently defective and gross the notions of many of the ancient philosophers were with respect to it; and also what insuperable difficulties must be found, notwithstanding all the discoveries since made about the rays of light, the organical texture of the eyes, and the impressions upon the *retina*, to give any plausible account of it, without the intervention of an immaterial and intelligent percipient; and, even with its assumption, that the mystery is not to be unfolded.

From a phantasm being excited, some way or other, in the mind, there ensued what was called a comprehension of it, as of a thing in congruity with the *phantasia*, or human imagination. What was to be understood by this congruity, or what distinguished the accords or discords of objects with the imagination, was the ground of the obstinate dispute that has been mentioned, betwixt Zeno, and Arcefilas, and the Sceptics, and their adversaries, about a true and a false *visum*. This last term, we have observed, was used by them to express every thing that affected the imagination, whether derived from the sight, or the other senses. The contest being already stated at large, we shall here mark the Stoical notion of a comprehension that was real, and another not real. It was the first, when it proceeded from a thing in existence; and the second, when it came from what did not exist but in the imagination. By this criterion, although a disputable one, they distinguished true *visa*, or comprehensions, from all fantastic illusions; such as occur in dreams, deliriums, and other perturbations of the soul. They denied not that these were a species of phantasms; but they called them the *apparitions* of the *phantasia*, which were not comprehensible, because they were impressed by no external object, and had only a casual and distant reference to what was introduced, and authenticated by the senses.

Comprehension was also considered, as it might be the foundation of bare opinion, or of science. If a thing was so comprehended by the senses, that reason could not disprove its reality *, it was held to be the latter;

* Zeno represented his doctrine about comprehension by the action of the hand. The palm and fingers extended, said he, are expressive of the *phantasia*; when bent

latter; which was thought to be proper only to wise men. If it could not bear the scrutiny of reason, it was to be reckoned no more than a species of ignorance, which belonged to fools. When the senses are sound, and free from impediments to their action *, their representation of objects was to be relied upon as true, and taken as the rule of nature for the truth of sensible things. The impressions of these being retained in the memory, excited *anticipations* of reason, or such common notions of things as are comprehensible by the phantasia. The mind, remarking similitudes amongst them, either joins them together, or makes different compounds of them; or else diminishes their apparent magnitude, or transposes their proportions. Hence, said they, whatever is understood by men, must either be from the incurrent evidence of sense, or by transition from it to the collections of reason; which last chiefly takes place three several ways; by *assimilation*, *composition*, and *analogy* †. All this was exactly Epicurus's doctrine in his Canonics; which yet is delivered by him as his own invention. But Zeno, and his followers, had more right to claim originality in it. They added *contrariety*, as a fourth collection of ideas. The mind not only joins together similar and dissimilar, and analogous conceptions, but also those which are directly opposite; such as death and life, animate and inanimate; place of body and vacuity; ideas which have a necessary reference to each other, and cannot well be conceived without being, as it were, presented together in the mind. And, thus, the *association* of ideas, which has been accounted a modern discovery, evidently made part of the Stoical arrangement of the human conceptions.

Previous to the impressions made, by the senses, upon the mind, or *supreme* part of the soul, it was accounted a *tabula rasa*. But, beside the inscriptions received from them, and a consequent awaking of the judgment

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a little, they denote assent to what is comprehended in it; and when clenched together, invincible comprehension. Cicero Acad. Quaest. lib. 4. pag. 38.

* De Placitis Philosoph. cap. 8. Ibid. pag. 15.; et lib. 1. pag. 9.

† The example of the first is, Socrates is known by his picture;—of the second, a Centaur, having the parts of a man and a horse conjoined;—of the third, when the ordinary size of man is magnified to that of a *Cyclops*, or diminished to that of a *Pigmy*. Cicero de Finib. lib. 3. pag. 76.

of the mind, about their similarity or dissimilarity, another faculty, or power, the soul had, was to be noted, and considered as innate and characteristic in such a being as man, endowed with sense and reason; which was that of assenting, freely, to the reality and truth of the images or ideas of things mentally surveyed, or of dissenting from it. For it was said, that, although the mind was passive * in the admission of phantasms, and could not but contemplate them in their impressed form; yet the approbation of them as true, or good, or just, was to be deemed a free and voluntary act of the rational soul. This argument was used by the Stoics, and particularly insisted upon by Chrysippus, to remove a palpable objection to which their system was liable, from its physical principles, that held forth such a chain of causes and effects, as implied a rigid and inevitable fatality in all actions and events in the world, and was, consequently, subversive of any free agency in man, considered as the object of a moral theory. Before pursuing the course of the Stoical argument, it may be proper here to recite the notions of preceding philosophers, with respect to fate or necessity, as opposed to chance, fortune, and accident; or to a supposed mixture of these two conceptions †. *Necessity*, said Thales, is the strongest of all things; for under it are all things; Pythagoras, that the world was enveloped in necessity; and Parmenides, that all things were done by it; and, for an explication of what was meant by *necessity*, he added, that it was the same with *fate*, justice, providence, and the efficient cause of the world. The obscurity of this explanation was not much diminished by the definitions of other philosophers ‡. Heraclitus defined *fate* to be reason extended through the nature of the universe; and, by nature, he understood an *aetherial* body, the seed of all productions in the world, and the fixed measure of their periods; or, as we may understand it, of all generations and corruptions. Empedocles made nature the cause of necessity, by means of principles and elements. Plato called fate the eternal reason, and the perpetual law of the nature of the universe. He referred some things to providence, and some to necessity; considering them ei-
ther

* Cicero de Fato, pag. 306 —9.

† De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 1. cap. 24.

‡ Stobaei Eclogae Physicae, fol. edit. lib. 1. pag. 12.

ther in respect to *matter*, or to the efficient cause of the world *. The Stoical doctrine was much the same: But Zeno, and his followers, disagreed in their descriptions of fate. Zeno called it the power of matter moving uniformly, and which differed little from providence and nature. Chrysippus explained it to be a spiritual power, maintaining all things in order; and, as he was apt to vary either his terms or conceptions, he called it the reason of the world governed by providence; or that reason by which the things past have been, the present are, and the future shall be. Panaetius asserted fate to be God. Posidonius accounted it the third from *Jove*; nature being interposed between them. In general, their doctrine appeared to be, that necessity was a cause immovable †, and violent, and to be distinguished from fate, which they defined to be a *concatenation*, or series of orderly causes; in which were included those belonging to men; and of them some were to be reckoned fatal, and others not. Hence the poetic description of the *Fates*, or *three Fatal Sisters*, might be understood; the names given them being correspondent to their several offices. One was called *Lachesis*, on account of distributing to every one a just portion, as if it were assigned by lot; another *Atropos*, because the distribution made was, from all time immutable, and not to be varied; and a third *Clotho*, as the action of fate, in giving the various lots, was conceived to resemble the twisting of threads, by connecting together, in one, both things themselves, and their names. In this manner, *providence*, by foreseeing, and providing, was understood to govern the world; *necessity*, to contain and uphold it; and *fate*, to carry all things round by irresistible sway; whether to generation, or to corruption.

Although Plato, Aristotle, and several other philosophers, admitted what they called *fortune*, or *chance*, to be a cause of things by accident, and which intervened, unexpectedly, in things of human counsel and enterprise ‡; yet the Stoics, as Anaxagoras chose to do, rather avoided entering into the dispute; and said it was such a cause as could not be known by human reason. But chance and fortune, in the sense of these philosophers,

* De Placet. Philosoph. ibid. cap. 25.

† Ibid. Stobaeus, pag. 15.

‡ De Placitis Philosoph. de Fortuna, ibid. cap. 29.

philosophers, and as commonly understood, are, and must be acknowledged, mere names, and therefore no causes; and, no more can *necessity* be reckoned any thing, without the supposition of a first cause of all secondary and efficient causes. Yet, if we admit, upon that supposition, that there are, in human affairs, some singular events, for which not only no cause can be assigned, but what, in the judgment of the wisest of men, are directly contrary to the state of all causes visible, and that preceded them; we may then be allowed to say, and do say, in common language, with respect to such events, that they are fatal or casual; *fatal* we call them, because they cannot be accounted for, without recurring to the *will* and act of a *cause*, superior to, and overruling all known or secondary causes; *fortuitous* or *casual*, because they rarely, and unexpectedly, intervene, and sometimes appear to us rather to interrupt, as it were, *accidentally*, and for a time, than to controul the general course of causes and effects, especially as these take place in matters of human concern.

It was generally said by the poets, and corresponded to the doctrine of most of the philosophers, that *Jove* himself, or the supreme God, could not resist the decrees of fate. How, indeed, could he be imagined to do so, when not only his whole will was supposed to be expressed in these decrees, but all his power and energy to be actually and constantly exerted in their execution? The ancient *fatalists*, as well as some modern *necessitarians*, presume, that the Supreme Being could design or contrive his works only in one way, and according to one plan, and no other; and, as has been observed about the doctrine of some *Scholastics*, that he has always, from all time, done, or has been doing, whatever he can or will do. That the Divine acts are ever consistent with, and guided by his moral perfections, is an absolute truth; but it is incompetent to finite minds, to say what the counsels of infinite wisdom are, or should be, with regard to the extent of these acts, or to what length they ought to go forth, immediately, either in the exertion of creative power, or providential dominion. As the first of these cannot be reckoned to have been exhausted by what was done, so neither can the second, although perfectly sufficient, in the scheme of it, for maintaining and governing all things, according to certain general laws of wisdom

wisdom and prescience, be conceived to have so immediately and completely received the *fiat* of execution, as to leave no room for particular interpositions on the part of the Deity, and render unnecessary his conducting the operation of secondary causes, and directing and overruling them so as to make them coincide with his general plan. Upon a contrary conception about the one, the *ultimatum* of infinite power must be found in the Creator's works; and it might be inferred, that he could not make the least addition to the magnitude of them, or have created one star more than he has done in the firmament of the heavens; and, upon the same, about the other, the conclusion might be, that he could have formed no other arrangement of the celestial bodies but that which obtains, or disposed, in another manner, the lines of their motion, without diminishing the wisdom of their contrivance. But, surely, there are several ways known to him of accomplishing the same ends; so that whatever he does in *the heavens*, or in *the earth*, although always wisely and justly done, is performed according to *his pleasure*. He is not, therefore, bound up or constrained in his acts or procedure; nor can any thing be said to be necessarily done by him, unless the contrary to it be an absolute inconsistency in itself, or, which is the same thing, contradictory to the immutable perfections of his nature. But it was for the followers of Heraclitus, in *Physics*, as the Stoics were, and other such corporealists, to say, most grossly, that the Deity was immersed in the material world; and, as if extended in his substance, pervaded all its parts. He, therefore, was to be considered not only as holding fast, like Homer's *Jupiter*, the chain of fate, but as having, himself, no will or activity but as he was inseparably connected, and of a piece, with it. How much more rationally and worthily may it not be conceived of the Creator of the world, that, as no soul or spirit made by him, in the highest rank of being, could possibly receive the perfection of its maker, either in natural or moral qualities, so the measure of these assignable to his creatures could not be according to one standard alone of excellence, but such as admitted of degrees, and subordinations in it, according to his will; and that, as the material creation could not have perpetual consistency in its parts, or everlasting and unerring powers of motion communicated to it, but only such as required, in time, a renovation;

vation; so, over both the intelligent and corporeal worlds, the eye of his providence is ever stretched, and the hand of his power ready to interpose, not to observe events unforeseen by him, or overtake what might otherwise escape his controul, but to behold how, in his unerring view, his providential instruments and ministers operated, efficaciously, to the purposes of their appointment; and in the event of any failure in them, incident to all created powers, to support them by his strength, or to supply by his immediate acts the aid and influence not found in them; and thus ascertain the sovereign dominion he has over all his works, and the necessary dependence which the numberless systems of beings have upon him for their subsistence, and just administration.

In maintaining the Stoical doctrine of fate or necessity, operating by a chain of causes upon all things, Chrysippus, its defender, found himself involved, first, in several dialectical questions arising from it, such as in the example mentioned in the *Logics* of Epicurus, that every annunciation, or *dicible*, as it was called, about a future contingent, was either true or false *. “Supposing a man to be ill in health,” said he, “it may be infallibly pronounced, with respect to him, that, if it be in the appointment of fate that he is to recover, he will recover, whether a physician be employed by him or not; and, under the contrary predicament, the negation of his recovery may be as certainly affirmed.” This was justly called his *Sluggish* reason, or argument, from its manifest tendency to discourage and suspend all industry in the affairs of human life. Here he was encountered in argument by Carneades, who insisted, that, if all things were done by antecedent causes, they must be effectuated by a coherent and close connection of these causes, and in each of these there must be all the power of natural necessity: But, where such necessity is, the agency of man is excluded, or else can be of no effect. It may, notwithstanding, be asserted, that, as he has agency of a peculiar kind, something is left in human power. When we inquire whence any particular event has arisen, it is not satisfactory to affirm, in general, that it has proceeded from natural and necessary causes; and, therefore, the futurity of its existence was always true. This would be saying

* Cicero de Fato, pag. 306.

saying no more, than that one thing had followed another, and something had been produced, without its being intelligible that there was any special necessity, or efficiency in the nature of things, that it should be so. Causes, therefore, must be known as efficient ones, otherwise they cannot be understood to be applicable to particular events. If, without considering their efficiency, we should only mark them as being antecedent to, or conjoined with what was effected, we might pronounce that *Hecuba*, from being the mother of Paris, was the cause of the destruction of Troy; or we might adopt the reasoning used by the deplo-
 rer of Medea's fate, in the tragedy, when she says, "I wish that never a tree had been cut by the axe on Mount Pelion, to furnish a plank for a ship's construction; for, if it had been so ordered, my royal mistress would not have rushed forth a desperate votary to cruel love." She might, as much to the purpose, have wished that no tree had grown there, or any such mountain as Pelion ever existed, and so gone backward, endlessly, with her wishes, as supposed that the circumstantial events mentioned by her had caused Medea's unhappy flame. There are, certainly, beside external causes, others that come not from necessity, but from the free and voluntary motions of human minds. Upon these are founded all our conceptions of moral principles, and moral action, and by them alone men understand what is just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable, blameable or praise worthy, in their intercourse with one another; and why, to certain actions, not only the character of merit is ascribed, and to others that of demerit, but also, upon what account the former are justly made the objects of rewards, and the latter of punishments.

Chrysippus, finding the controversy brought to this point, and managed by able disputants, for necessity or liberty in human actions, thought it the most eligible part *, and what would most distinguish his ingenuity, to appear like an *honorary arbiter* between the parties, although he rather inclined to the side of liberty. To this purpose, his argument for the human mind being passive in receiving impressions, but exerting itself, voluntarily, in approving or disapproving their ima-

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* Diogen. Laert.; et Cicero, *ibid.*

ges, has been mentioned. He supported it, further, by distinguishing betwixt causes *principal* and *perfect*, and those that are assistant and immediate. He did not deny antecedent causes; but alledged, that they were of the latter, and not of the former kind; and meant to allow of *fate* as a general cause or reason of events being *forcibly* connected together, but not so as to infer that all things were alike *necessarily* constrained by it. It would be absurd, in philosophy, to affirm that the human mind is moved without any cause; but there is no absurdity in asserting, that the cause is neither exterior to it, nor one immediately preceding its motion, but another, and such as arises within itself, from its own native power of *willing*; and which is experienced to be unconstrained and free, in all instances of assenting to the appearances of objects; and approving or rejecting them, according to different views of their truth or propriety. The operation of an antecedent cause, as distinguishable from a perfectly efficient one, may be exemplified, *physically*, in the case of a *cylinder* placed on a declivity, and receiving an impulse. Once moved, it takes a fresh motion from its own volubility, and descends, in consequence of it, over the whole inclined plain. So the human soul, when acted upon by impressions of objects, may be conceived to move, not necessarily, or always, with the force, or in the direction, they have immediately given it. For, although natural appetite *, or desire, be not in our power, so as that we can lay it aside at pleasure, yet assent to it is; and, according as it may be judged by the mind to tend to good or ill, and to deserve approbation or not, it is controulable; and can either be indulged or restrained, forwarded or checked, upon the consideration of its nature and consequences. It is the exertion of this power that distinguishes the wise from the fools, and also denotes the human character to be virtuous, in opposition to that which has the stamp of vice. The mind is not moved without motives; but these, even although they come connectedly, have not a fatal, or irresistible influence, unless the soul be of a disposition to yield, blindly, to their first impulse. Thus, many men, rude by nature, and uncultivated by reflection, notwithstanding they be not urged by any uncommon

* Aulus Gellius, lib. 6. cap. 2.

mon or considerable pressure from motives, discover themselves to be *voluble*, like the *cylinder*, and rush on, by their own impetuosity, until all the vices and faults of their temper be displayed. Others, again, who have as much, or more reason, to complain of the unfavourable incursion of external motives upon them, or what men call their *unlucky stars*, and their *fate*, are seen, with little effort, and without offence to those around them, to surmount these alledged obstacles to proper conduct in life; or, to express it more properly, to transmit the chain of fate, which is, in itself, orderly, and according to general reasons of things, with a composure that enables them to observe events, and their ordinary consequences, and to expect no more, and to desire no more, in the one or the other, but what may be understood, and provided for by this attention. Such, therefore, are not excusable who arraign fate, and would throw upon it the blame of their irrational behaviour. The ills experienced by them are caused by their own temerity; and men, as the Pythagoreans affirmed, generally consent to the misfortunes they suffer.

Such was Chrysippus's reasoning, and that too of the more moderate Stoics, who wished to support their scheme of *fatality* in consistency with the free and voluntary determinations of the human mind. How connected this argument was with the foundations of moral principles, and the obligations to virtue, need not be pointed out to the least intelligent; nor what difficulties attend the solution of it to the most studious and best informed. Metaphysics, notwithstanding their boundless latitude, must here be circumscribed, when the question turns upon ascertaining a fact, what power motives have in determining, ultimately, all the resolutions of the human mind? The liberty of man's will, said various of the disciples of Zeno's school, is a *chimera*, with which, from the idea it gives him of self-importance, he is vainly inclined to flatter himself*: But, upon what just grounds or reasons? The *will* is not a vague faculty, that acts independently, and without regard to motives. It is always, in some shape or other, under the influence of them, and acts in consequence of a judgment or opinion formed in the mind; that

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* Seneca, Marcus Antoninus, *passim*.

this or that object is either most advantageously, or most conveniently, its choice. Free, therefore, in its determination, when thus impelled, it cannot be reckoned; and it is only from the variety and perplexity of circumstances, or incidents, which, in certain cases, intervene, and produce, confusedly, their effect, that men, upon subsequent consideration, find themselves at a loss to recognise the particular motives that determine them; or else, they look upon them as feeble, and what might have been easily resisted by their will; and hence they rashly conclude, that exertions of it are made often with little, or no inducement whatever, from motives.

The modern *Necessitarians* have expatiated much upon this reasoning, and represented what a fantastic, absurd, and ridiculous creature man would be, if he was not, in all his actions, governed by motives. His character would be ambiguous, and a *riddle*, never to be explained. Human life could be no more than a *legend* of unconnected events, about which, as proceeding from the absolute *will* of capricious agents, no judgment could be formed, or any rule of knowledge take place. But this is contrary to fact. Particular men, in all ages, have had some similarity of character; and different nations have discovered their resemblances. Both the one and the other, when placed in like circumstances, have acted much in the same manner, and proved, not only that they were ruled by motives, but that special ones had force sufficient to produce, nearly, a uniformity of manners and conduct.

To these arguments the maintainers of human liberty reply, that they never conceived, or contended, that men's wills, or resolutions to act, were unaffected by motives. Their reasonable nature supposes them to be moved, and to act, with discernment and choice, from regard to them. But it is next to begging the question to conclude, because the human mind, in the natural exercise of its faculties, enters into rational considerations of the objects presented to it, and decides in favour of one or other of them, that, therefore, it is not free, but enthralled by motives. What other idea can we form of free and unconstrained agency in human beings, but that they follow, in their motions and actions, the decisions of their reason and judgment? Motives, unless they be those of a *physical* kind, are not necessary causes of action. All of them
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which are of a moral nature, and relate to the conduct of life, derive their influence from the judgment of the mind about their fitness, or unfitness, to be complied with, their apparent good or evil, or apprehensions entertained of their probable consequences. Men's determinations, with respect to these points, are known, even in similar circumstances, to be variable. The same motives, although there be no external impediment to their operation, have not the same power, either amongst individuals, or societies of men. Characters of nations, that approach the nearest to each other, are still diversified. An entire correspondence of sentiments, in particular persons, is a phenomenon as rarely to be observed as a perfect likeness in their features. Of what great importance, then, is it to be told, as if it were decisive in the argument, that all our determinations follow the last judgment of the mind *, or, as it has been called, the *most prepollent* motive? But the question still is, what greater necessity arises from the mind's last judgment of motives, more than from any preceding one, to oblige it, irresistibly, and without having the power of controul, to resolve and to act, in this or that particular manner, and not in another? It may as well be said, that men cannot avoid willing and acting always according to the present views they have of objects before them; and then, every motive, in every instant, must have the same power over them; and the *first* and *last* judgment of the mind will be of equal influence. But, hardly have the most enthusiastic *fatalists* ventured directly upon an assertion, so repugnant to the general sense and experience mankind have of the great difference of the weight of motives, and which subverts as much all rational judgment, with respect to them, as it does any notion of a free choice, or liberty of the human mind consequent to it.

That a self-determining power belongs to human minds, may be also inferred from the diversity of precepts and institutions, religious and philosophical, moral and political, to which not only various nations, but the same people, at different periods, have been taught; *practically*, to conform. Motives of the strongest kind appear to be rejected, and weaker ones to be substituted in their room. It seems to be often more
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* Vide Leibnitz's Theodicea.

from the particular cast or tone of the mind itself, than from the force of motives, that such changes are produced. It must be owned, that, in many cases, men cannot strictly say what motives have determined them, and still less can they account for their preferring certain motives to others. They arraign themselves as blameable, for compliances made by them. They feel compunction and remorse, and consider themselves as just objects of punishment. How inconsistent are these appearances with the notion of the irresistibility of motives; or that, on account of their influence, whatever men may will or do, is ultimately resolvable into a fatal necessity? But, to what purpose do we investigate a question, that, from difficulties insuperable in theological and moral reasoning, never can be properly resolved. Having only given a partial exposition of these difficulties, we conclude it, with observing a fact respecting the difference of the moral doctrine of the opposite speculatists upon the question. It might be presumed, that the *fatalists*, or *necessitarians*, in their scheme of morals, should have required less of man, subjected to destiny, and to whom the power of overruling motives was denied; and that, on the contrary, the maintainers of human liberty should have exacted a greater measure of virtuous resolution and performance. Yet we shall find, that the Epicurean, and even the Peripatetic system of Ethics, was a relaxed one, compared with that of the Stoics; so that those who held they *could do no more than concur with fate*, considered this doctrine as no valid objection either to the foundation of moral principles, or to the extension of the practice of them, in the utmost possible degree; while their antagonists, who reckoned on the natural freedom, and ability, of the human mind, to act a virtuous part, chose rather to limit and diminish, than to enlarge and exalt the efficacy of the faculties and powers they ascribed to man. Without pretending to account for these inconsistencies, it may be said, that both theories, although the one, more obviously than the other, appeared to have been founded on moral and theological considerations.

The former proceeds upon the principle, that there is a perfect rectitude in the system of the universe, maintained independently of human action; which, in virtuous minds, willingly corresponds to its order; and, in the vicious, is constrained to obey it. The remedy of the defects,

fects, or evils, of the creatures, is not supposed to rest at all upon their precarious wills, or weak energies, but to be found in the original destiny of things, and the regular progression of causes and effects. Man is taught by it, not to consider himself as having a detached, or individual portion of power, but only a dependent, and co-operating, one in the moral system. Yet, he may count it incitement enough to virtue, to know that he bears a part in the general scheme; the perfection of which is the glory of the supreme cause of order, truth, and beneficence, in the world.

The latter ascribes a free agency to man in moral conduct, as the privilege of the intelligent order of beings, and places the excellence and merit of human virtue in the choice made of it. What is wanting, or weak, in the agent, to its due attainment, it supposes may be supplied by proper education and discipline; and, although he cannot propose to reach its utmost heights, or even presume upon the nearest approach to them, he entertains the hope of making a laudable progress; the more laudable, whatever it be, that it is the act of his free will * and

* A late eminent author, in his argument for *necessity*, contends, that all praise, or blame, in human agency, rests, *ultimately*, upon the disposition or frame of the mind; so that a virtuous disposition is the *only* object of the one, and a vicious temper of the other. "As every action," says he, "doth, in effect, proceed from an internal cause, such as that of the one or other of these opposite dispositions, the praise or blame must ultimately rest upon this cause, and not upon the *external action*, or the *power of acting*."—*Essay upon Liberty and Necessity* by Lord Kaimes, pag. 145.

Praise, or blame, is the effect of moral sentiment in a spectator, which respects not merely rational agency in general, whether internal or external, but also that of a qualified agent, such as man, having the capacity and power of acting, or not acting, and of choosing between one species of action and another. The bare instincts of nature, as Aristotle observed, are not properly termed virtues; which are endowments of the human soul, transcending natural temper, and not instinctive dispositions, to be found in children, and even in changelings. When we speak of *laudable qualities*, we always consider them as vested in, and exhibited by, a proper agent. If they be exerted by any being without a consciousness of their excellence, and a preference of them to their contraries, our praise is either feeble, or withheld altogether. The commendation is given, not so much to the performance of virtuous deeds, which may be of more or less consequence, according to circumstances, as

and resolution, which enables him to overrule improper motives, by which others are swayed, and renders him not barely accessory to, and, whether he chooses or not, instrumental in diminishing, and partly controuling, the evils of human life arising from vice, but a willing and determined agent in that noble purpose; to which, for dignity and worth, no other can be compared. But we turn now to the *physics* of Zeno and the Stoics; much connected as the principles of them were with their theology: A sufficient view of both may be taken within the bounds of the present Section.

It should have been before observed, that the definition of philosophy, in the Stoical school, was much the same with that of Plato. It was termed the study of *wisdom*; and *that* defined to be, the *science* or knowledge of things *divine* and *human*, and *of their causes* *. Seneca excepted against the last article, as a superfluous addition; since *causes* were included in the preceding terms of the definition. The prolixity of the division of physics, into its parts, which has been mentioned, was, in the discursive manner of the Stoics, upon all the subjects of science. Their assumption of two *principles of all things*, according to the most ancient and general doctrine of the philosophers, is chiefly to be attended to and considered. The terms used to express these principles were the same with those adopted in other systems of philosophy; which, agreeably to Anaxagoras's doctrine, distinguished between *matter* and *mind*, the *element* and the *principle*, or that *subject* which was passive, and acted upon, and the *principle* that was active and efficient of its purposes. Without the concurrence of both principles, they conceived that nothing could be effectuated; since, if power were not exerted upon it †, matter could

to the good will and intention of the performer. In all human virtue, there is such a degree of imperfection and weakness, that its praise or merit appears to rest chiefly, and *ultimately*, in the free choice with which its acts are done; and in the actor overcoming propensities he may find in himself, to a contrary deportment.

* Cicero de Officiis; et in Tuscul. Quaest. lib. 4. Epist. 88.

† Neque, enim, materiam ipsam cohaerere posse, si nulla vi contineretur; neque vim, sine aliqua materia: Nihil est, enim, quod non *alicubi* esse cogatur. Cicero, Acad. Quaest. lib. 1. Senecae, Epist. 65.

could have no cohesion; and, if there was no subject to act upon, power could have no operation. Thus was the active power of mind supposed to be conjoined with the passive substance of matter; as principles equally original, and necessary to each other, and to the constitution of the world, and the things it contains. This theory coincided with the poetic *Cosmopeia*, which, as has been observed, was a traditional account of the world's origin from a *chaos*, or a rude and unqualified state of matter, that, from times of great antiquity, had been propagated in various countries. It may, indeed, be considered as the basis of most of the *physical* systems that have been explained; although the speculations built upon it, by philosophers, were diversified, and some of them grossly absurd. It held not forth a fortuitous production of the world, or a necessary one, from the inherent motions of matter; but that it originated from the act and influence of a *divine* and *intelligent mind*; which, if not the creator of matter, was the sole modifier of it, and imparted to it all its forms and qualities. Zeno, by parentage a Phœnician, appears, instead of inventing a theory of his own upon the subject, to have followed that which obtained among the learned in Sidon, and to have copied it exactly; so far, at least, as it related to the formation of the four natural elements. The passage in Diogenes Laertius which supports this allegation, is remarkable, and has afforded room for various comments *. The Latin version of it may be given, in a note upon the page.

There is no principle, however intelligible, and capable of the most rational illustration, but may be perverted; especially if assumed into connection with any theoretical tenets inconsistent with it. Much of the patch work, observable in the physical systems of the Greeks, may be ascribed to this error. Without strictly examining the import and tendency of the principles they borrowed, either from foreigners, or from one another, they often, improperly, blended them with their

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* Deum in principio, cum apud se esset, essentiam, *vel materiam*. per aërem, in aquam convertisse. Et, ut in planta semen continetur, ita Deum, qui seminalis ratio mundi est, tale semen in humido reliquisse, quod facilem aptamque operi materiam praeberet; ad rerum deinceps generationem. Deinde progenuisse primum, elementa quatuor; ignem, aquam, aërem, terram.—Diog. Laert. lib. 7. pag. 459.

own speculations. This was done, partly, from the difficulty of inventing new ones, and also to take advantage of the authority and credit allowed to the old. We need not, therefore, point out particularly, as the laborious *Bruckerus* † has done, the various sources from which Zeno may be reckoned to have collected the principal tenets of his system. If he ranged in the physiologies of Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and Plato, and culled from each of them what he thought fit, the practice was not a novelty among the founders of the Grecian sects. Reprehensible, more than others of them, he could not be; unless his general theory was more heterogeneous, and incoherent in its principles. That his physical doctrine, or that of his school, was marked with a palpable contradiction, by first assuming, in rational speculation ‡, a principle distinct from matter, that acted upon it powerfully, and with intelligence; and then, in *physics*, retracting, or reducing it to material substance, or *body*, is too evident to be denied. A slip made, from their definition of matter, altogether passive, and void of form, into another miserable one of body, sufficed, it seems, to remove or palliate the contradiction. A *corporeal*, or *body*, was defined to be, *that which either doeth or suffereth*; and, as every thing might come under that predicament, all being was concluded to be body; a piece of logic which hardly has its parallel in absurdity. An *incorporeal* was understood to be that which was comprehended only by the mind, or reason; and of that species of being they reckoned but four things; their *dicible*, which has been explained, and *time*, *place*, and *vacuity* of body. If any idea was affixed by them to the active, intelligent principle, it could be no other than that of a *being* immaterial, comprehensible by the mind, and whose operations on matter made it, in that manner, only known to men. They allowed, that, without its accession, matter could not cohere, or have the form of body. The *will* of accession, and the thought of what was to be done, could only proceed from it. As that *will* and thought could not be conceived to have extension, in any similarity to that of matter, neither could

† Tom. 1. Part 2. lib. 2. cap. 9. pag. 904. et sequent.

‡ Stobaei, Eclog. Phys. lib. 1. Diog. Laert. ibid. pag. 460. Plutarch de Repugnantiis Stoicorum.

could the *being* that willed and designed be rationally supposed to have *materiality*, or a corporeal nature; otherwise, its action could not avoid being in, or upon itself, and not upon a distinct substance. The *being* called by the Stoics *Deity*, and the *perfection of reason* in the universe, would, in this conception, be, not a simple substance, or principle, but a compound one; nor a cause of any thing, without itself, which is the proper notion of a cause, but only a modification of the mutable part of its substance. But Zeno, and his disciples, it appears, could make no more of a physical theory of the world, than involve the one principle in the other; and, although each was still considered as a distinct *genus*, both composed one system, called the *world*, in which a providential and fixed arrangement of all causes and events was ever to be found.

In the interpretation of this *physico-theology* of the Stoics, the learned and critical of antiquity, and in modern times, have found much difficulty. Whether the ungenerated, and eternal *mind*, was to be understood as so combined with, and congenial to the material substance and elements of the world, that the distinction betwixt the one and the other could only be that of a purer and more exalted species of corporeal substance, which formed the essence of the *Divinity*, while every element of nature, compared to it, was of a gross and defective composition, appeared to be a problem about their doctrine, not easy to be resolved. Their contemplations of the action of the Diving Being, whether respecting power, or extent, were expressed in metaphorical language, always ambiguous, and liable to misconstruction †. Thus *Jupiter*, in agency, was pronounced to be an *aetherial* and *artificial fire*, which contained in itself the seeds, or seminal forms, out of which all particular things in nature had their production. A prolific and conservative fire or *spirit* ‡, it pervaded, more or less, every portion of matter,

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† De Placitis Philosoph. lib. 5. cap. 19. Cicero de Natura Deor. lib. 2. Diog. Laert. ibid.

‡ ——— Vivere mundum,

Et rationis agi motu, cum *spiritus* unus,

Per cunctas habitet partes, atque irriget orbem,

Omnia pervolitans, corpusque animale figurat.—Manilius, lib. 1.

rer, and part of the world; and, according to the changes it effectuated in them, it might be called by a variety of names. It was *Jove*, or *Apollo*, as it shone in the sun and fixed stars; *Ceres*, or *Proserpine*, in the vegetative power of the earth; and *Neptune*, in the controuled tides of the sea. As there is but one *Dis*, or supreme and ever living Deity, so there is but one world, *which is full of him*, and one providence, by which it is ruled. Therefore, the world itself, has the appellation of *God*, animated, as it is, with an intelligent soul, and formed and qualified as an animal. Here the critical question is, What was the meaning of the Stoics, when they said, in the language of Manilius *, and of Seneca, not only that the world, in all its extent, and throughout all it contained, was moved by the Divinity, but that *itself* was God? Whether we understand this last expression to imply that the soul of the world, or that active and subtile principle, called *aetherial* fire, and distinguished from the elementary and common kind, was the essence of *Deity*, or that the *mundane* system, taken together as a whole, was his substance, or his divine nature transfused into, and necessarily blended with, its constitution; manifest it is, that, in either of these conceptions, or positions, the Atheistical idea of *Spinosism* is included; or such an approach made to it, as is ever to be reprobated. It was denied, indeed, by *Boethus* †, the Stoic, that the world was to be accounted an animal, or had the *apparatus* of an intellectual soul; and the author *de Placitis* ‡, after saying that the world in general, and also the stars and the earth, were called God by the Stoics, adds, but the supreme of all the Gods was the *mind*, which was in the aetherial fire. This *mind*, or deity, was represented by them, not only as different from the corporeal substance of the world, but as the *Hegemonic* of, and therefore a superior principle to, the *mundane* soul. Under this idea §, Seneca expresses his conception of him, as the artist of the works in the world, and the *incorporeal*

reason

— — Deum, namque ire per omnes,

Terrasque tractusque maris, coelumque profundum.—Virgil.

Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris.—Lucan.

* Qua pateat mundum, divino numine verti, atque ipsum esse Deum. Manilius, lib. 1. Totum hoc, quo continemur, et unum est, et Deus est; et socii ejus, et membra sumus. Senecae, epist. 97.

† Diogen. Lart. ibid.

‡ De Placit. Philos. lib. 1. cap. 10.

§ De Consolat. ad Helvetium, cap. 8.

reason of them. We might add, that the terms used by Marcus Antoninus, and Epictetus, in speaking of the Supreme Being, are still less exceptionable than those of Seneca, and others that have been mentioned; who may be suspected of adhering to the notion suggested by the *systematic*, but absurd, argument of the Stoics, that every thing *which acted, or suffered, was body*; and, in consequence of their holding causes to be *corporeal*, because they were *spirits*, or aerial intentions affecting the parts of all things generated with form *, called the human passions, and other qualities of the soul, bodies existing in it; and itself a body, as it was the cause of life.

Unless, therefore, we make allowance for the extravagance of the Stoics, in their dialectical reasoning, intermixing its absurd conclusions with their physical doctrine, they cannot be altogether acquitted of holding forth a deity, whose essence, although reckoned aetherial and *spiritual*, was not sufficiently distinguished from body; and that they entertained the gross imagination, that thought and extension might be attributes of the same substance. Their highest conception appeared to be, that as reason was the *hegemonic*, or ruling principle of the human soul, and frame, so was the *divinity* in the constitution of the world, thorough which, by the vehicle of fire, were disseminated, not only the principles of animation and sense, but, in many of its parts, portions of reason in various degrees; some of them knowing, and others, not knowing, the tendency or end of this endowment. Men, said they, in respect of their rational souls †, are the offspring of the Divine Being, emanent particles of his aetherial spirit or *breath*; and such are the invisible daemons that abound, either in the celestial, or sublunary regions. Generated, and therefore, not excepted from corruption, the whole of them are; together with the elementary fire, that is dispersed through the natural world. It cannot, for ever, retain its conservative quality. When the air, naturally humid, is rendered by it dry and combustible; when the earth, like a burning oven, reflects all around it only light and heat; a revolution of nature must ensue. In all bodies, there is observable a disposition to it. They con-

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* Plutarch, de Repugnant. Stoic.

† Ratio nihil aliud est, quam in corpus humanum, pars divini spiritus, mersa; et divinae aerae particula. Seneca passim; et Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. 2.

tain particles of fire, which are ever struggling to get free from their confinement. At present, all the agitations, and the changes they undergo, are no more than the various, and incessant movements of this active, and powerful element. At last, it will predominate universally, and every other substance but *one* will be dissolved by it; and nature be no more, than it was in the state of chaos. At this period *, *he* whom Cleanthes in his hymn calls the principle, or cause of nature, will retract all substance into himself; in order, after some interval, to produce it again, in a renewed form. The opinion of the dissolution of the world by fire, and of its renovation, was entertained by philosophers of greater antiquity than the Stoics; and several of the poets have retailed it. Even where the former differed in their notions about its origin, and constitution, some of them were inclined to think it not only liable to vicissitudes, but to periodical changes, either by inundation, or conflagration. We find the sentiment hinted by Lucretius †, as well as solemnly delivered by Seneca and Manilius ‡. Nature, howsoever represented by them, as the original and parent of all things, appeared too weak in her productions, to afford them constancy and perpetuity. Generation, and corruption are, always and chiefly, visible in them. What admits of change to the worse, said the Stoics §, is perishable; but the world admits exsiccation of its parts, so that the whole is consumable; nothing is everlasting, and nothing will, in the revolution of ages, remain, but the Supreme Being; styled by them, according to Laertius, the maker of all essence, himself being ungenerated, and incorruptible, and the architect of the world; and who, at certain fatal periods,

* Post inflammationem, relinqui nihil, praeter ignem, a quo rursus, ac de eo renovatio mundi fieret; idemque ornatus oriretur. Cicero *ibid.* Et Plutarch, *De communibus notitiis Stoicorum.*

† Sic igitur, magni quoque circum maenia mundi, expugnata dabunt labem, *putresque* ruinas. Lucret. lib. 11.

‡ Cum tempus advenerit, quo se renovaturus mundus extinguatur, viribus ista suis, se caedent; et sidera sideribus incurrent, et, omni flagrante materia, uno igne, quicquid nunc ex disposito, lucet, ardebit. Ovid's paraphrase of the tradition is often quoted. *Esse quoque in fatis, &c.* It has been observed, that Heraclitus, who made fire the primary element in nature, also taught the resolution of all things into it, or a general conflagration.

§ Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* p. 454.

periods, will resume and absorb in himself, all divisible substance, and exhibit it a new in a regeneration of nature.

When we consider this representation of the Deity, as a being distinguished from the world of nature, and having the dominion over it, and to whom Cleanthes gives the title of the good, as well as the intelligent, we may be almost induced to think our animadversion on the Stoical conception of the Supreme God erroneous, or not altogether just; notwithstanding it must still be accounted defective and exceptionable. Their great and fundamental error was in their pretending to investigate, physically, the essences of all beings, and that of the divine and eternal mind, no less than of others. By the ancient philosophers, in general, essence was understood to be a thing having *continuity*, or *parts without parts*. Plato, and others, who conceived the Deity to be incorporeal, therefore said he was above *essence*; but those who considered essences to be the only proper object of physical science, and to belong to all substance, carried, in their apprehension of the most celestial and exalted being, the idea of extended parts, but with the refinement of them in the highest degree. According to the Stoics, it was not the common element of fire *, but an aethereal species, a *subtile spirit*, that pervaded and actuated the mass of matter †. The Deity was not that fiery spirit; but, by the medium of it, he was *essentially* present every where, and came, as it were, into contact with his works. Administering the alimentary fire, and conducting its artificial process, he is exhibited in nature, and, from his efficiency of whatever is wise and beneficent in the world, he may be called by that *parental* name, and also by that of fate ‡. The natural world is not a congeries of matter, or corpuscles, fortuitously moved, and accidentally compacted together. It is the production of an all intelligent cause; which has not, barely, a conjunction of parts, but a fitting of them, upon a scale of due proportions to, and connections with, one another. The combination of
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* Cicero de Natur. Deor. lib. 2.

† Elementum rerum omnium ignem dicunt; ejus *principia*, deum, et materiam. Aristocles apud Eusebium. Vid. Leipfii Physiol. Stoic. lib. 2. dissert. 8.

‡ Materiae universae, fœtricem ac moderatricem, esse divinam providentiam. Cicero ibid. lib. 3.

the parts, and their subserviency to the harmony of the whole, is not dissoluble by chance, or abruptly, but in consequence of a long and stated progression of causes and effects, that has its ordination and tenor from the original cause and former of the world. Upon any other plan than that which obtains, the visible or intellectual world cannot be constituted in the nature of things *. Not that the will, or determinations of the Divinity, are to be understood as constrained by fate, or any necessary course of things exterior to himself. He knows no necessity but that of willing and acting †, according to the reason and moral rectitude of his nature. Being, in himself, the law of reason and truth in the universe, he cannot be otherwise than invariably observant of it in what he designs or performs. It is one, as he is, and can have only one exhibition; and, although apparently diversified in its parts, it holds forth, in the world of beings, animated and inanimate, rational and irrational, a chain of causes and events, strictly connected together, and constituting one system, in which every thing bears a necessary, and relative part; and of which he must be confessed to be, alike, the original and the end,

That there should be a various interpretation of the best authorities we have for the Stoical doctrine about the nature, or essence, of the Deity, and his agency in the world, need not be surprising. Plato confessed, that human language was inadequate to the subject; and that it was hardly allowable to men to pronounce what the *one eternal being* is, when we have no proper terms to express the natures or essences of inferior things ‡. “No one,” says Seneca, “*has known God*: Many think unworthily of him, with impunity. Whether is it,” adds he, “that our knowledge of him is obstructed, because to him belongs a *radiance*, too subtle

* Nec Deus, ob hoc, minus liber aut potens est; ipse, enim, necessitas sua est. Seneca, in cap. 1. Quaest. Natur.

Finxit in aeternum causas; quae cuncta coercent,
Se quoque lege tenens —Lucan.

† Necessesse est ei eadem placere; cui, nisi optima, placere non possunt. Sen. ibid.
Sed nihil, in tota magis est mirabile mole,

Quam ratio, et certis, quod, legibus omnia parent. —Manil. lib. 1.

‡ Epist. 31.

subtile and bright for the human eye to behold, or that such exalted majesty as he is possessed of, affecting no ostentation, is retired within a veil of the purest sanctity?" These, and other such acknowledgements, that the most eminent of the ancient philosophers make, both with regard to the short extent of the human faculties, when exercised in researches so profound, and the difficulty of finding words free of ambiguity, might have disposed the critics, in modern times, not to a harsh, but to the most favourable interpretation of their principles and reasoning. Yet, this just and candid rule has not always been observed. Hardly one of them has escaped without a scrutiny into his conceptions and expressions; especially those respecting the idea and contemplation of the *divine being*, who can be but imperfectly comprehended by finite minds. The stigma has, indeed, been justly fixed upon the materialists of every species, so far as, from the plain import of their tenets, and not from metaphysical or logical inferences, they have been proved to be such in their theories; and thus, also, other errors and defects of the best heathen theology may, and ought to be reprehended, or pointed out. But the reprehension, in some instances, has been extended where it might have been spared; and, as Plato † has not been altogether acquitted of mixing some taint of materialism in his idea of deity, and even his representation of his essence alledged to be no better than that of Heraclitus, also adopted by the Stoics, we need not wonder that the charge has been brought with less scruple against the latter, who, from their physical doctrine, were more obnoxious to it ‡. We see the accusation, and the controversy about it, stated, at some length, by Bruckerus, who, in rigid judgment, pronounces them to stand in near affinity to the Spinofists. But, as Cudworth, Morhoof, and Mosheim, dissent from him, his opinion may be the less regarded; and we may account that which has been given about the God of the Stoics the more tenible one; not that he was the fiery matter pervading the world, or, as it has been scholastically, and not very intelligibly, expressed, *a form informing the whole mass of matter*, and an *inseparable part of it*, but a principle of a distinct nature, called by Seneca the *incorporeal*

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reason

† Vide Bruckeri, Hist. Critic. Philosoph. tom. 1. lib. 2. cap. 6. pag. 689.

‡ Ibid. pars 2. lib. 2. cap. 9. pag. 937.

reason of things, that ruled and superintended all the material motions, so as to make them correspond harmoniously to his original plan. To the probability of this opinion, not that author's expression only, but other more particular and descriptive ones, in the Cleanthean Hymn, bear the strongest testimony.

The variety and ingenuity of the arguments the Stoics used, to prove the world's divine original, and its providential government, are remarkable; and such as, being the best found among the ancient philosophers, have been copied by the ablest of the modern, who insist upon the moral proofs *. How is it possible, said they, to imagine that the admirable system of the world could be arranged by any power or agency destitute of reason and intelligence? That which is manifest in the constitution of all things, is of the most perfect kind. Nothing appears wanting in the structure of the natural world to complete its wise design; and the order of the moral one is analogous to it. Both are formed upon one plan, and constitute together one system; an undeniable argument that they are held together, and contained, by one *divine and undivided spirit*. We behold, in the system of nature, a variety of what may be called perfections in their kind, attained to in its parts, such as the growth of plants and animals. Can this scale of varied beings have an origin, or be carried on, without there exists, at the head of them all, an excelling nature, or being, than which nothing can be conceived better? When reason is held to be the chief glory of man, it should be considered, whence the faculty of it is derived to him. That which is void of mind and reason can never be supposed to generate *rationality*. It is because he is a member of the world, and especially of that part which was made for those animated essences that have reason, and are above him, that he participates of it. Man, although endowed with reason, cannot produce those celestial things which he daily beholds †. They have in them evidences of power, counsel, and wisdom, vastly superior to what he finds in himself. They are things greater, and stronger, and wiser, than he; and, therefore, never could be

* Cicero, et Seneca, passim.
Diogen. Laert. ibid. pag. 459.

† Cicero de Nat. Deor. lib. 2. pag. 216.

be designed, or made, by him. That which produced them, transcends him, infinitely, in art and might. What, then, can *that* be, but *God*? To the congruity of its visible parts, the world joins that of an association betwixt all intelligent natures, and holds forth a community of Gods and men; in which the irrational animals are not included. There is one *fount* of rational souls, although the derivatives from it may differ in their degrees of understanding. It is that *soul of the world*, which represents, and may be called *Deity*, that gives birth to them all. In the stars, and celestial regions, they are of purer essence, and more enlightened, than those dispersed in the lower spheres, and which partake more of the contagion of body. Human souls are sparks struck off from them, and therefore congenial to their divine original. They are not conjoined to the bodily *foetus*, but attend its birth. As men grow up, the rational principle discovers itself, and extends its thoughts, not to human things only, but to those that are divine. The celestial powers attract their attention, and beget impressions of their own descent from, and relation to them. The human mind, which is, itself, sagacious and provident, sees, in the appointment of these powers, the highest wisdom and providence. Man, in this contemplation, is disposed to adore that heavenly benignity, by which all beings, and he in a special manner, are preserved. He feels, in himself, a desire of immortality, while he is here ordained to a mortal life. Is his soul's existence to be prolonged beyond this short period of its abode, or to perish with it? Various difficulties attend the question, whether it be, indeed, a substance exempted from corruption *, and, differing from the incorruptible soul of the world, is subjected to the law of other animals here below, and attains not that high perfection? And, upon the supposition of its surviving the body, what is to be its state, and how long it will endure? Will it have a remembrance of its actions in the body; or, forgetting the past scene, be elevated to another, where, in its sublime retreat, it will begin more properly to *know itself*, and its destination for immortality? These, and other dubious queries, respecting the purifications necessary to be undergone, before it can be associated with its kindred spirits,

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dis. 341 a. ill. 1001. 1011. 1012. 1013. 1014. 1015. 1016. 1017. 1018. 1019. 1020. 1021. 1022. 1023. 1024. 1025. 1026. 1027. 1028. 1029. 1030. 1031. 1032. 1033. 1034. 1035. 1036. 1037. 1038. 1039. 1040. 1041. 1042. 1043. 1044. 1045. 1046. 1047. 1048. 1049. 1050. 1051. 1052. 1053. 1054. 1055. 1056. 1057. 1058. 1059. 1060. 1061. 1062. 1063. 1064. 1065. 1066. 1067. 1068. 1069. 1070. 1071. 1072. 1073. 1074. 1075. 1076. 1077. 1078. 1079. 1080. 1081. 1082. 1083. 1084. 1085. 1086. 1087. 1088. 1089. 1090. 1091. 1092. 1093. 1094. 1095. 1096. 1097. 1098. 1099. 1100. 1101. 1102. 1103. 1104. 1105. 1106. 1107. 1108. 1109. 1110. 1111. 1112. 1113. 1114. 1115. 1116. 1117. 1118. 1119. 1120. 1121. 1122. 1123. 1124. 1125. 1126. 1127. 1128. 1129. 1130. 1131. 1132. 1133. 1134. 1135. 1136. 1137. 1138. 1139. 1140. 1141. 1142. 1143. 1144. 1145. 1146. 1147. 1148. 1149. 1150. 1151. 1152. 1153. 1154. 1155. 1156. 1157. 1158. 1159. 1160. 1161. 1162. 1163. 1164. 1165. 1166. 1167. 1168. 1169. 1170. 1171. 1172. 1173. 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spirits, in the purer regions of aether, have made the wisest hesitate upon the point of the human soul's immortality. The most distinguished disciples of Zeno disagreed in their doctrine with regard to it. Cleanthes maintained, that the souls of all men remained until the general conflagration. Chrysippus restricted this privilege to the wise; and Marcus Antoninus *, considering the argument, could decide it no otherwise, than by saying, that, if the prolongation of the soul's existence, after death, was a just appointment, and according to nature, the disciple of wisdom might rest assured that the Gods had ordained it, at least for those, who, by their virtuous actions and character, have grown into a conformity with them. But, even such ought not to desire any other appointment for them, than what the Gods, in a consistency with the nature of things, have fixed upon as the best. "It becomes every wise man," says Epictetus †, "to submit his mind to the law of the governour of the *whole*; as good citizens do theirs to the law of their particular community." "It is enough," adds the philosophic Emperor, "if the Gods have destined us for no more, to have lived in their august city, the world; more venerable to men than that of Athens to her citizens, who yet revere Codrus and Theseus, and others that embellished her, while we have more reason to exclaim, in adoration, *we have beheld the city of the ever living King.*"

Man was held, from his constitution, to be a *microcosm*, or image of the world ‡. The dignity of nature, which approaches to that of God, being signally represented in his person, he was supposed to be the more sensible of the venerable form of the world. They distinguished between the *whole*, and the *universe*; understanding by the first, the world, which was finite, and a *plenum*, and by the other, space, or vacuity of body, which was infinite, and contained the world §. They called *place* that which was occupied, or half filled, with body. They held matter to be infinitely divisible; but that itself, being continuous, and not consisting

* Marc. Anton. de Rebus Suis, lib. 12. sect. 5.

† Lib. 1. cap. 12.

‡ ——— Quid mirum, noscere mundum,

Si possunt homines, quibus est, et mundus in ipsis,

Exemplumque Dei, quisque est in imagine parva.—Manil. lib. 4.

§ Diog. Laert. pag. 461. Stobaei Phys. cap. 17.

sisting of infinite bodies, could not have infinity. In their idea of time, except that it was an incorporeal, they did not altogether agree. Zeno defined it the interval of motion, and the measure of the celerity and tardiness of the existence of things. Posidonius reckoned it, in general, infinite, but divisible into past and future, as the present time was a point between the two extremes. The Stoics were more copious and distinct, in their explications of the phenomena of nature, than any of the ancient sects. The sketches of their physical theory given by Diogenes Laertius, and much more the extracts of it we find in Cicero, and which he turns so justly, and elegantly, into an argument for the existence of deity, and divine wisdom, in the world, are clear proofs of the improvements made by them in the science of physics. Seneca's *Natural Questions* discover more general knowledge of the subject, than any other book transmitted from antiquity. But we come now to conclude our whole survey of the Philosophy of Greece, with the account of the *Ethics* of Zeno's school.

SECT.

SECTION II.

Nature's first recommendations to Man.—How best supported.—Virtue the proper instrument of action in human life, and the efficient of its end.—Eligible for its own sake.—Equally productive of what is agreeable and profitable.—The real good of Man placed in his own power.—The cure of the passions not an apathy.—The Stoical wise man's perfection.—Objections to their scheme of Morals.—Qualifications of these objections.—The general conclusion.

ZENO, and the disciples of his school, made a prolix division of the heads, or common places of moral philosophy; which were reckoned those of appetite, things good and evil, virtue, ends, acts, and offices *. Their first position in *ethics* was, that nature had implanted in every animal a desire to preserve itself, and to be in such concord with its state of being, that whatever things tended to cherish it, were affected and loved; while those contrary to it were avoided or rejected. This is so much in the primary direction of nature to all living creatures, that their young are observed to seek what is salutary to them, and refuse what is hurtful, even before they have experience of the pleasure or pain attending the gratification of their appetites. It is, therefore, an error, and what is turned by some philosophers to abuse in moral speculation, to assert, that this innate propensity to self-preservation is resolvable into the appetite of pleasure. For, with what propriety

ty in reason can that be so called, which is no more than the energy of a creature, sensible of its existence, and, having the natural love of itself, is desirous of continuing its life and well-being? The pleasure arising from the indulgence of this primary desire can only be reckoned an accessory one; which is recognised upon subsequent reflection and experience. With respect to this, and other original appetites, nature appears to make little or no distinction between animals and the vegetable species. In the one, and in the other, they are found alike accommodated to their ends, without the intervention of thought or will; and, as trees seem to smile, and to be made gay, by their buds and flowers, so animals derive a physical vivacity, and exhilaration, from the opening of their propensities. For some time, the appetite in human creatures has no other aim but that of self-preservation. What may be conducive to this end is unknown to them; until reason, that eminent faculty bestowed on man, awakes to make the discovery, and to act as the ruler and guide of the irrational desires.

It is not without just foundation, that nature's first recommendation to man, is the conservation of his state of being; since he is endowed with a capacity of knowing *what it is*, and considering how it may be promoted, not, simply, upon the desire of good, general and undefined, but of that species which is most estimable, and has, in the eye of reason, the character of worth and excellence. Every discovery of truth, every observation of the conformity or relation of one thing to another, or of their contrariety, is agreeable to the human mind; and one of its first, and chief satisfactions, arises from such investigations and discoveries. To find out what is consonant to nature, and what repugnant, and to live according to the knowledge of this, and in the selection of the natural congruities, is the office which reason and philosophy prescribe, and also the ultimate end of human actions. By natural appetite, they must be owned to have for their object good or felicity; and reason dictates, that it should be the highest to which men can aspire, or the most worthy and exalted. Of this nature every action is to be reckoned, which is consonant to what is fair, honest, and pertaining to virtue; while any one, which falls short of this rule of excellence, is to be disregarded. Hence the instinctive appetites, whose objects are infe-

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rior to it, are not to be deemed desirable in themselves *. To render life consistent, and of a piece, it is necessary that its action and its end should be of one kind. As the members of the human body are fitted to one manner of living, so the impulse of the mind is not to every form of life, but to a special one; and to this, reason and its powers are more particularly adapted. Enlightened by philosophy, the mind makes the discovery, that the end of action is to be found in the efficacy of the action itself, and not in any thing extraneous to it; in like manner as the end of some arts is included in their practice. What, then, is that instrument of action in human life, the employment of which is equivalent to the end? It is virtue †. And, what is the principle of virtuous action? It is, to hold no other moral distinction of things but one; which is that of things honest and fair, and those which are base and ignominious ‡. Hence the founder of the Stoical sect framed this syllogistical argument, as the leading one of his system of ethics,—*whatever is good is laudable; whatever is laudable is honest; therefore, whatever is good is honest.*

Unless this proposition, either formally, or in effect, be admitted as true, no scheme of morals can be instituted §, nor the action of virtue supported in the human character. If there be not allowed a decency, and

* Cicero de Finib. lib. 3.

† Ibid. pag. 75.

‡ It is here we are to consider the Stoics as departing from all attention to natural instincts and propensities, and proceeding to establish their moral scheme, chiefly, upon the dialectical ground. "The desire of knowledge," said they, "at first excited from natural curiosity, becomes so much the delight of the mind, that it is chosen for its own sake, without regard to the instincts of nature, or their objects. So we often esteem those persons more to whom we are recommended, than them who gave the recommendation. Duties and offices appear, from the light of reason and contemplation, more engaging, than from any natural propensity to their performance. The sense of the harmony of virtuous action, is felt by us to have an attraction of a superior kind, to which all men ought to yield." "But," says Cicero, "how is this consistent with their fundamental maxim, of living in concord with, and agreeably to, the dictates of nature. Their stride over this principle," he observes, "was similar to that made by the Epicureans, who first held pleasure to be the only good, and then pretended to hug pain, when virtue required of them adherence to its principles."

§ Cicero de Finib. lib. 4. pag. 90.

and dignity, in honest and virtuous conduct, which makes it amiable, and worthy of admiration, and therefore laudable; and, if such deportment be not accounted a real good in itself, and eligible, even without regard to its utility, the only proper and certain foundation of moral offices must be weakened, or entirely subverted. But the truth of the premises, in the proposition from which the conclusion is inferred, can hardly be disputed; or, if it be, the common sense and reason of mankind is sufficient to establish it. No rational person ever applied the epithet of laudable, or commendable, to any thing which includes not in it the notion of good, or of what is agreeable and beneficial. The course of life that is happy is approved and praised; but no one makes the encomium of that which is miserable. The native excellence of virtue, which has appropriated to its species of action the name of fair, decorous, ornamental, and honest, in like manner challenges, and procures, universal commendation. Who is so perverse, and unnatural in his affections, or so unhinged in his reason, as to look with approbation upon characters destitute of this admired trait, and represent them as having an equal claim to applause? The sordid and covetous, the flagitious and profligate, themselves, expect it not; but, under the consciousness of demerit, and the secret dread of reproach, they would have wished to have gratified their avarice, their ambition, or their lust of pleasure, by other means than those which have disgraced them in the opinion of mankind, even although they had been free from the apprehension of condign punishment.

It is no less evident, that, from the impulse of nature, we not only prefer, in our esteem, honest studies and pursuits to such as are base, but that our affection to the one, and our hatred of the other, proceed, without taking into view their different consequences. Thus, it may be asked, what interest have men in the actions of others done in a remote age, or at a great distance of place from them, any more than they have in the motion of the planets and stars, which are placed beyond their reach, and above their controul? Yet, as they make the latter their study, so they are solicitous to hear a narrative of the former, and to express their approbation, or their blame, of what has been transacted; agreeable to that internal perception which all men have of a beauty

and comeliness in virtuous deeds, and of a deformity and turpitude in their opposites. Even the feigned representations of human characters, under the one or the other of these views, excite attention and concern: But, remarkable are the impressions made on the minds of the noble youth, a proper part of whose education it is to read, or hear recited, the lives and actions of those illustrious men, who preferred a virtuous behaviour to utility or gain. They discover how differently they are moved with the history of the *Scipios*, and that of the *Tarquins*; and how readily nature, in all such cases, prompts to the discrimination of characters, and to an esteem or detestation of them, according as they partake of virtue or vice.

There is, then, in virtue, a convenience to the end, which is happiness; there is an eligibility of the principle, for its own sake, and reflection recommends it under the idea of good. It is, therefore, to be selected as perfective of felicity; and the province of its disciple is, to choose the honest action, and to reject the base. But, possessed as he may be of discernment and prudence in this function, he cannot perform his becoming, but arduous task, without magnanimity. If pain be accounted an evil, if death be reckoned the last and greatest disaster, he will, as is natural to all creatures who have this conception of them, avoid encountering the one, and fly, as far as possible, from the other. In either case, the sense of manly behaviour will forsake him; and the dictate of duty, however urged, from the consideration of what he owes to parents, country, or friends, will not be regarded. He will not dare to try if pain may be rendered tolerable, by enduring it; or allow himself to think what power imagination and opinion have to elevate or depress the human mind*; and that the sufferers in a noble cause, such as the warrior, who bleeds in defence of his country, or the patriot, who dies in vindication of its laws, feels not half the pains of his honourable wounds, or grieves for his fate, but exults in it, as a consummation of his title to glory and fame.

He who darts his javeline, or shoots his arrow at a mark, not only does every thing to take his aim aright, but his last and greatest exertion

* Cicero de Finib. lib. 3. pag. 78.

tion must be, to reach and to hit it. In the acquisition of virtue, which is the convenient affection, and the chosen one in life, every power of the soul must be called forth, and the utmost effort made, without fear of any obstacle in the way, or under any despondency of success. Conscious of his high and glorious aim, the man of virtue beholds all other objects thrown down into a level below it; or, if they interfere, he considers them as not insuperable, by the strength of his resolution, and the vigour of his abilities. In these he has a confidence; and presumes the more, that they will avail to overcome all opposition, as many of the objects that stand in competition with virtue, are more apt to excite his contempt, than to engage his regard; and, in all events, he is persuaded, that no real evil can befall him. To prudence and magnanimity, he joins temperance and justice; and finds the summary of all the moral offices, or the main stem that supports the rest, to be constituted of these four; which, resolved into their several operations, imply right judgment or knowledge of offices to be done; undergoing duty, and sustaining what attends it; moderation and composure of appetite; and distribution, not only of what is due, but of what is fit to be dispensed to all. They are (*κατορθώματα*) perfect reasons in contemplation, and complete rectitudes in practice. Of measures or degrees, they do not properly admit; but must be found, each of them, in its full proportion and vigour, or not at all. To say, that there be more justice, and less justice, more constancy, and less constancy, is equally absurd as to affirm, that truth may be more or less true *. They are connected together, and may indeed, be deemed qualities common to the same agent, although they be different energies. He who does one thing wisely, does another with firm resolution, another with composure, another with justice; so that each of these virtues, being similarly practised by the soul, leads on to the exercise of the others. As, in general, there is a near resemblance between the affections of the body and those of the mind †, so it is more especially manifested in this, that the right state of both depends on the harmony of their constituent parts; or, when the

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qualities

* Diog. Laert. lib. 7. pag. 444.
pag. 167.

† Cicero Tusculan. Quæst. lib. 4.

qualities proper to each of them agree among themselves. In this manner, the virtues evidently prove the health of the soul. A collective power, or what may be called a body of them, is formed, by means of their concord and union; and hence, a beatitude supreme, stable, and enduring, is the result.

Seductions from virtue most commonly arise from the pursuit of objects foreign to it, from false conceptions of good, and from the irrational opinions in credit with those with whom we are conversant. Yet nature need not be arraigned of misleading us; since there is no perversion in the inclinations she gives. She, also, has marked virtue and vice with such a discriminating line, that it may be apparent to all, not only in the extremes of both, but in those instances of affection and action, in which, according to the erroneous opinion of some philosophers, it is supposed to disappear, or become imperceptible. But, as in the virtues, which are *perfect offices*, there is no mean performance, in like manner, in the vices, called (*αμαρτηματα*), there is an equality which excludes degrees. Equal they are, as they proceed from the same source of false judgment, or wrong affection, common to them all. In each of them, there is a transition from the line of perfect rectitude; which, whether it be less or more, sufficiently discovers the frenzy or the vice.

Good, they defined to be that which had utility, or what differed not from it. "The part," said they, "is neither the same, nor different from the whole. The useful object is to be regarded as good; and the useful action partakes of virtue; yet these are not all the qualities of objects or actions. The pleasing and the agreeable are also distinguishable in both *, and are often found united together. To constitute the whole of good, then, we must admit that combination which nature has made, not of things really different, but what, although congenial, are marked with distinct ideas in our conception. In this manner, the *bonum* and *pulchrum*, the profitable and the honourable, are one and the same,

* *Honestate igitur, dirigenda utilitas est, et quidem sic, ut haec duo verba inter se discrepare, sed tamen unum sonare videantur.—Etenim, quod summum bonum a Stoicis dicitur, naturae convenienter vivere, id habet, hanc, ut opinor, sententiam, cum virtute congruere semper.—Cicero de Officiis, lib. 3. Sextus Empiric. lib. 10. pag. 442.*

same, and equal ingredients of the highest and chief good." Their division of it into its matter or subject, and the *operator*, or what was comprehended, *materially*, in the virtuous action, and *formally* in the agent, is one instance, of many, in their philosophy, how much the verbal distinctions of the dialectic were affected among them. It is unnecessary, therefore, to follow them in tracing out the accessories of good, such as complacency, joy, and the like. The general inference from these distinctions was, that all good, not attainable by the will, and active powers of the mind, could not properly come under this denomination; and that the desire of such good, and much more a dependence upon it, was not only erroneous, but unphilosophical, and degrading to the man of wisdom and virtue. "He is," said they, "by his constitution, made to owe all real good and enjoyment to himself. It originates within his mind, and terminates in its character; to the perfection of which no external advantages are requisite. By placing these at a distance from him, and rendering them precarious and transient, nature has plainly shown, that they are not his proper felicity, and that he ought not to be deluded by them. Do these things, indeed, deserve the name of true good, which are convertible into its opposite? We say, justly, it is the property of heat to warm, and of cold to chill; because these different effects are, invariably, experienced from them. But no such affirmation holds, with respect to the efficiency of external things in producing happiness. Not only riches, glory, and nobility, but health of body, beauty, and strength, are not always found conducive to this end. In many cases they have a contrary tendency; and, therefore, they can never be reckoned amongst things intrinsically, or, by natural consequence, good. They may, at most, be ranked among those of a variable and indifferent nature; which often present the form and shew, but want the essentials of felicity*."

The Academicians and Peripatetics advance a doctrine not very consistent, when they admit virtue to be the principal ingredient in felicity, and

* It is to be observed, that Posidonius, Panaetius, and others of the Stoical school, considered many externals as a species of *good*, or secondary *eligibles*.—Diog. Laert. *Ibid.* pag. 428.

and the only object worthy of estimation, and hold, at the same time, the goods of nature and fortune to be expetible in themselves; so that the virtuous man, although he might be, in a great measure, happy without them, was rendered more blessed by their attainment. It follows, therefore, that they are necessary to complete his happiness; and that it must increase or decrease, according as these things, exterior to the mind, happen to abound with, or to be wanting to him. Their assertion carries in it this absurdity, that, beside virtue, allowed by them to be the sole estimable good, there are other desirable things; and yet, when these are taken together with virtue, both of them are of no more estimation than that divine principle alone. It is surely more consonant to reason, to pronounce external goods, in general, to be things indifferent, since they are not, in themselves, efficient of felicity, but, according to their use, may be converted either to ill or to good; and, if even they should be granted to have the latter quality, they are not at the command of our wills, or placed within the reach of human power. If a distinction is to be made between their kinds, the just one would be, to say of some of them, that they are to be *preferred*, and of others, that they are to be *rejected*, and of some others, that they are *neutral*. Thus, soundness of body, and ingenuity of mind, are preferable to disease, and to a slow capacity; and, in like manner, life to death, pleasure to pain, joy to grief, wealth to poverty, and glory to disgrace. The first have some estimation, but not an intrinsic one; and a preference is given them only in respect of the latter, which are rejected. They are to be assumed, and accepted as commodious in life, but not chosen as objects worthy of estimation*; while the others are to be rejected as incommodious, but not feared, or avoided, as evils. By adopting this distinction, the crown of dignity and worth is preserved eminently to virtue; and as, in a court, we speak not of the king being *preferred*, but confine this phrase to those nearest him in honour, so it is to be taken, when used in a moral estimate of good and evil. Things exterior to the mind, and not of the nature of virtue, are, in a proper sense,

* Cicero de Finib. lib. 3. et 4. pag. 115. Seneca de Vita Beata, cap. 22. Ibid. Epist. 80. et 96.

sense, neither the one nor the other; but such of them, as not being adverse to virtue, and are suitable to nature, may be said to be *preferred*, or *promoted*, as having some estimation, in comparison with others, which are of little or no account.

The passions are vehement emotions of the mind, against the constancy of nature, without reason, or contrary to it *. They are opposed to what may be termed the *eupathies*, or good affections of the soul, and may well be reckoned its diseases. The springs of them are opinions of good and evil, conceived without reason or prudence; and, in this respect, they are to be regarded as so many false judgments pronounced by the mind, in matters of the greatest consequence in life †. What, indeed, is avarice, but a conception of accumulated wealth, as an acquisition highly prized in the world? What intemperance in the provisions of the table, or what ungoverned appetite, but a vain imagination that these, and other such excesses, are not so much instances of depravity, as they are proofs of the liveliness of desire, and of constitutional vigour, joined with an ostentatious display of the means afforded for every sensual gratification? But the vice of the mind, in these cases, although latent, or palliated, is discoverable; and, in fact, is generally acknowledged by those who are under the influence of such delusions. In the extravagance of desire, and in the transport of pleasure, the judgment of the mind is more overpowered than lost. It often perceives the evil of the violent passion, and yet yields to it. Self-blame is mixed with the consent; and hence many are justly represented by the poets, in the condition of *Medea*,

Against their better judgment borne away.

When men are deceived, or mistaken, in any point of reason or judgment, it suffices for their correction, and the change of their opinion,
to

* Diogen. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 433.

† Sed omnes perturbationes, *judicio* censent, fieri, et opinione; itaque, eas definiunt *pressius*, ut intelligatur, non modo, quam vitiosa, sed etiam, quam in nostra sint potestate. Cicero *Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 4* — Nulla naturæ vi commoventur; omniaque ea sunt opiniones, et judicia levitatis. *De Fin. lib. 3.*

to be shewn their error. But such conviction is not enough to liberate them from the sway of unruly desire, or shameful fear. The unhappy prejudice is owned by them, while its indulgence is continued; and nothing, but the experience of the aggravated evil, can avail to correct those self-condemned fools.

Philosophy, which has been often called *the medicine of the soul*, has for its particular object the cure of the passions*; but this cure consists not in an *apathy*, which implies an extirpation of the good and placid affections, as well as of the vicious and turbulent ones. The former, being consistent with the tranquillity and constancy of the mind, are to be entertained in all their proper extent; and the latter, as the causes of perturbation, are to be suppressed. As the vehement and vicious passions may be reduced to four principal ones, fear, grief, envy, and jealousy, so the *eupathies* may be comprehended in three sources, those of satisfaction, cheerfulness, and equanimity†. It may be said of *caution*, that it is the wise man's declination of evil, without any mixture of vain or abject fear; and that circumspection and discernment attend it. *Will* was taken, by Zeno and the Stoics, in a peculiar sense, for the natural movement of the mind towards good, under the direction, and with the constancy of reason; and was, therefore, to be distinguished from blind and ungoverned desire. In concord with its rational approbation of good, arise benevolence, humanity, and the kind affections connected with them. Dispassionate, therefore, in a moral sense, as the wise man is, his sensibility to all the becoming and laudable movements of the soul is manifest. His proper sphere he knows to be the rational life, and that which is connected with, and perfected by, suitable offices.

Nature

* Cicero, Tusc. Quaest. lib. 3. pag. 148.

† Ibid. lib. 4. pag. 169.

Diogen. Laertius, ibid. Plutarch. de Genitura Animalium.

It was the doctrine of the Stoics, that the turbulent passions, having their sources in nature, could not be eradicated; but that the impulse to their gratification, as it arose chiefly from false judgment of good, might be, and was, totally suppressed in the breast of their wise man; who had his *eupathies*, but none of the *perturbations* of passion. To say, therefore, that they held an *apathy*, in the absolute sense of the word, was a falsification of their tenet, and what they could not maintain, without a contradiction in terms. Vide Senecam de Ira, lib. 1. cap. 8.

Nature has laid a foundation for the perception and knowledge of a *perfect moral office*, agreeable to, and incumbent on man, in his condition and rank in the universe. His understanding is a detached *particle* of that sovereign reason, which pervades the whole. The particular nature, and the universal, may be circumstantially varied, but can never be essentially different, or entirely disjoined from each other. What is order, proportion, and congruity, in the general constitution of things, is, in man, a rectitude of sentiment and affection, analogous to it. His obligation to correspond with the universal system, arises from the nature and quality of his internal perceptions; which mark to him the essential differences of things, and represent some objects in one determined light, and others in another. Even the common notions that prevail among mankind, with respect to justice and injustice, sobriety and intemperance, timidity and fortitude, and their approbation of the one, and their blame of the other, are interpreted, by the disciple of wisdom, as hints afforded by nature of a fitness and unfitness in the reason of things, which it becomes every rational mind to regard as a rule both of sentiment and of action. It may, indeed, be asserted, that there is a *pre-conception* of justice and temperance, prudence and fortitude, as each a virtue or excellence, before it be exemplified in the act, or exhibited by any agent. No state or community of men could, by any declaration, impart to these virtues the character of right and true notions, unless the human mind was predisposed to recognise them as such. The idea of justice, therefore, is founded in nature, and not in the authority of the laws or customs of nations. Hence it is, that, when particular communities have enjoined a species of action contrary to, or inconsistent with, the natural sentiment of right and wrong, the man of virtue has been seen to adhere to his principle, and to act upon it, without regard to the loss of his fortune or of his life. Such a high sense of moral conduct, independent of the more remote and inferior considerations of public or private utility, has been testified by illustrious men in several ages and countries of the world; who, therefore, may be quoted as exemplifying the perfect moral office, revered among the gods, and held sacred by all the wise among men.

Such is the explication of the (*κατορθωμα*), or perfect moral office; the characteristic of which is, that, beside being only competent to the wise man, it requires no other argument to prove its truth and obligation, but what is derived from the natural conception of virtue, as agreeable to the eternal reason and fitness of things. The middle, or common office, for which Zeno invented the word (*καθηκον*) *, was held to be inferior to it; for the performance of which, not a perfect, but a *probable* reason only, might be given. If it interfered with the perfect moral office, its obligation ceased, or was to be rejected. The proof of it proceeded upon the consideration of the special circumstances, conditions, relations, and connections, in which mankind are, or may be placed. The determination of the wise man to conform to it, arose from his theory of nature, and the views presented to him of a common, as well as a particular good, sought after, and generally attained, amongst every species of animals. In the whole of them, scarce any appeared to be produced for themselves alone, and without preserving a correspondence with those of their tribe. Many of them, beside being naturally attracted to their tribe, associated together for their common defence; and others, having a more perfected instinct, laboured painfully for the benefit of their species; in comparison with which, the toil and hardship submitted to by the individual, was lightly regarded †. Instincts similar to these were not only found in man, but an enlargement of them arose from his many social faculties. Speech, conference, discourse, a curiosity that prompts inquiry, an imagination that teems with new objects of it, and an aptitude to teach others, as well as to be taught, are, all together, such incitements to man's association with his fellows, and such engaging bands of this intercourse, that no possession of wealth, remote from society, no solitary gratifications, however repeated, can compensate for the want of that exquisite entertainment he finds in living and acting in connection with those of his species. Hence, the man of wisdom embraces society, from that powerful recommendation which nature has given it; and that instructs him, that *man* ought not to

* Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 430. Cicero de Officiis, lib. 1. pag. 381.

† Cicero de Finib. *ibid.* pag. 81.

to be alienated from *man*; were it only upon the account, that he is *man*. He, therefore, joins himself to a civil state, that he may participate in the mutual exchange of offices, and have the opportunity of doing to others all the good in his power. He approves, as a dictate of reason, that, where a community is formed, and a public interest established, there the private good is to be held the inferior one, and, in every interference, to yield to that of the generality. Praise worthy, therefore, is the man to be accounted, who meets danger and death for the sake of his country. His action, in such a case, is, indeed, no more than that which nature has made the mark of the nobler animals; who, in proportion to their superior strength, take upon themselves the defence of the weaker of their tribe. Thus, the bull confronts the enemy of the herd; and declines not encountering the rage of the lion. How much more is such generous action the characteristic of heroic men; such as *Hercules*, *Bacchus*, and others, whose vigour, whether of body or mind, was made subservient to the benefit of the human race? What, indeed, do we mean, when we call *Jupiter* the best, and the greatest, the *help bringing god*, and the guardian of hospitality, but that he takes charge, in a sovereign manner, of the safety and welfare of mankind? If thus made the care of the immortal gods, can the interests of mankind, or their preservation, be accounted an object of small moment by men themselves? The world in which we live is, as it were, one *city*, common to the gods and to men; between whom, there subsists an affinity and connection, which extends not to the irrational and brute creatures. Dissimilar in their qualifications, the latter are not under the same law with the former, who know justice and goodness, not only in the act, but in the principle. Thus, the wise man has a sense of the virtues, as they may be displayed, either in respect of the community at large, or of what individuals have a title to require of him. His ideas of the common rights of humanity, and of these belonging to every citizen of a republic, do not exclude his conception of private property, as a species of right distinct from both these. For although, in a theatre, every place be a common one, yet, that seat which any person occupies, is held, unquestionably, to be his possession. In general, the wise man considers the offices he owes to society, as relative to his particular station,

tion, and to be regulated by it; but in such a manner, that no action of his may contradict the leading maxims espoused by him, as a man capable of perfecting, by the study and practice of virtue, the fair character of his mind, ever productive of his highest felicity.

Under this predicament, he is disposed and qualified to act a suitable part in every situation of life. His habitual virtue, failing him in none, will ever prove equal to itself. Whether, then, he rules as a magistrate, or obeys as a citizen; whether he occupies the place of safety, or of danger; whether he be in affluence, or in want; conversant with pleasure, or with pain; extolled by the voice of the multitude, or depreciated; he will exhibit the same principles, exemplify the same character, which nature and reason have taught him to assume, not in degrees, or mediocrity, but in the full extent of its excellence. Defection from it, in the smallest instance, he considers as equivalent to a total revolt, and holds that man incapable of virtue, who reaches not its utmost perfection*; especially as all its ingredients are connected together. In the estimate, therefore, of his many qualities, every name of honour and praise may be ascribed to him; and, even those epithets are applicable to his character, which are not literal, but allegorical descriptions of its incomparable merit. He, alone, is found in all his faculties†; he is free, in the properest sense of the word; he is rich, as well as fair; a king, truly, he is, and more than a king: He is *divine*, and hath a god within him; which, under *Jove*, exalts him to an equality with the immortals‡. Has he, then, no human weakness, no defect at all? He has; but it is only an inevitable frailty of nature. The spleen may invade him, and involve his mind in a dark or distracting cloud.

That

* Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 444.
dosis Stoicorum.

† Cicero de Finib. lib. 3.; et in Para-

‡ Horace's fine ridicule upon the chimerical perfections of the Stoical wise man, is heightened, by considering it, not as the fiction of the Epicurean poet, who threw out a witty stroke against a sect he did not esteem, but as exposing a concession, which, whether they would or not, they were obliged to make, about the imbecillity of nature. The spleen, or vapourish fit, incident to the wise man, notwithstanding his alledged perfection, which the poet expresses in half a line, contrasts the whole character:

Ad

That this standard of perfection, held forth by the Stoics in the character of their wise man, was an imaginary one, and what neither Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, nor any of the most venerable personages of their sect, ever pretended to reach, was, in effect, acknowledged: Yet, it was said by them, that what had not been known, might *possibly* be discovered *. From their adopting a most fantastic tenet, that all *sages* supported one another, and had such an (*ωφελιζ*), or reciprocal help in communication among them, that every satisfaction or pleasure shared in by an individual, was tasted of by the rest; it may be supposed, that they thought a compensation for the want of perfect excellence and felicity, in any particular character, might be afforded from all their virtues, when combined together. But such absurd assertions, which were in affinity with their *paradoxes*, these egregious flowers of their dialectic, brought their moral theory into much controversy and ridicule. By their graver adversaries, their paradoxical sentences were impugned with phlegm and with acrimony. The Academicians, and other sceptics, treated them with derision; and they were generally sported with by the poets. The detail of their ethical principles and precepts was so moulded upon their *logical* ratiocinations, which consisted chiefly in *enthymems*, and other abrupt, or lame figures of the syllogism; that, as Cato is said to have affirmed, in his commendation of their connected arguments, if but one *iota* was put out of its place, the whole series of them would be deranged. It is, also, to be observed, that the more rigid, or, as they would reckon themselves, the most *orthodox* of their sect, would admit of no qualification of any of their general principles. Disputable as these might be, and at variance with the common sense and experience of mankind, a conceited adherence to them was maintained; as in their affirmation, that virtue alone, without any exterior concurrence of health, strength, or corporeal well-being, was a sufficient foundation-

Ad summam, sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,
Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,
Praecipue sanus—nisi cum *pituita* molesta est.

Epist. 1, lib. 1.

* Cicero de Officiis, lib. 1. cap. 43. Plutarch. de Repugnantiis Stoicorum.

dation for complete happiness *. As this point became the main ground of controversy between them and the Peripatetics, it gave occasion to Panaetius and Posidonius, two of their eminent authors, to dissent from this tenet. Their antagonists boasted, that, from their disagreement in various instances, they had often no more to do, in order to confute them, than to state the contradictions among themselves. Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Zeno, has taken care to collect and animadvert upon them; and Plutarch, in a particular treatise †, has made the most of this argument, to vilify their principles. The one author had a manifest partiality to a contrary system; the other, addicted to no particular one, chose to make his attack upon the theory of the Stoics, eminent as it was in fame, and boasted of by its disciples for the perfection of its dialectical structure.

But, liable as the Stoical system was to such animadversions, it must be owned, that, in the source and explication of moral offices, it excelled the theories of the other sects. Several of the disciples of the school displayed in their writings an accuracy of method, and a copiousness of invention, peculiar to them ‡. The Roman orator, instructed in all the Grecian philosophy, and who first exhibited it in the language of his country, preferred the dissertation of Panaetius upon *Offices*, as the best, and adopted it as a text for his own treatise on that subject. The Stoical doctrine was singularly adapted to attach the mind to virtue, and to enforce its pursuit. The selection it made of this principle of action, as the only noble, and eligible one in human life, and the contempt with which it treated every extraneous and inferior motive, had a direct tendency to exalt the idea of its worth, and to increase its influence over the minds of men. Studious of its excellence, and bent on its attainment, as the highest perfection and happiness, the disciples of the Porch were prompted to distinguish themselves by virtuous exertions. Even that arrogant idea of a self-derived, and independent felicity, assumed by them, availed,

* Diog. Laert. *ibid.* pag. 445. Cicero, *ibid.* lib. 4.

† De Repugnantibus Stoicorum.

‡ Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Zeno, pag. 418. mentions various of the Stoics, beside Panaetius and Posidonius, who wrote, with approbation, either on the theoretical or practical part of Ethics.

availed, in a surprising manner, to their progress in virtue. Hence the characters exhibited by this philosophy, were marked with striking features in every rank and station of life. In the robe of the senator, and that of the military commander, no less than with the plain cloak of the schools, they were conspicuous, and discovered a command of the passions, and a government of the mind, generally admired. Virtue, with them, was no more than the exertions of reason and resolution; and, where the proper sources of both were afforded by nature, they presumed the object to be attainable. Here we state not the question, Whether this scheme did not far overrate the powers of the human mind, and, therefore, might be concluded a vain and fantastic one, which could never be verified in practice? The more pertinent query is, Whether a system of morals, which held perfection in virtue to be obligatory and practicable, was, in respect of proficiency in it, and the proper discipline of the mind, preferable to any other, that admitted virtue as a general rule of conduct, but joined with it other objects, as equally necessary to happiness; whence arose the indulgence of desires and aims, which relaxed the force of the virtuous principle? It appears, that, comparing the Stoical with the Epicurean, or the Peripatetic theory, in this view, the solution of the question, in favour of the former, is not difficult.

After the reputation of the Stoical sect declined, and that of Epicurus got the ascendent at Rome, its patterns were still admired in the Tubero's and Varro's, the Cato's and Brutus's, and other distinguished characters in the Roman republic. It revived again in the time of the Emperors, and was held in the more esteem, as it appeared to bid defiance to their barbarous edicts. Thraseas Paetus, and his consort Arria, were then seen to act their applauded part; and Helvidius Priscus proved, by his manly behaviour, that a virtuous mind was invincible by misfortune, or the hardest trials. It ascended the throne in the person of Marcus Antoninus; who, in the soliloquies he composed, adopted most of the Stoical principles and maxims, although without adhering strictly to all their tenets. In his manner of representing them, the asperity of their precepts are softened, and the absurdities of some of them so far corrected, that we easily forget that they were ever included in the general theory.

theory. Of Epictetus *Manual* much the same thing may be said; especially when read together with his scholar Arrian's dissertations; in which the *anecdotes* given of the manners and sayings of that philosopher, discover him to have entertained sentiments different from those of a dogmatical or unfeeling person. If we look further for illustrations of the Stoical doctrines, with respect to the providential and all-wise government of the universe, by the supreme and eternal mind, and these supported by the strongest arguments, we find them best displayed in Simplicius's commentary upon Epictetus's well known treatise.

It is an observation made by Plutarch upon this philosophy, which, in several respects, he endeavours to expose, that, where it was grafted upon a sedate and mild natural temper, it was productive of the best effects; but, when mingled with a sanguine and haughty disposition, it run to excess, and overset the mind. But, allowing the remark to be just, it may be said, not inconsistently with it, that the propensities of nature will always so far prevail against speculative opinions, however strongly inculcated by philosophy, that the latter will be forced, in some measure, to yield; but if, on the contrary, the doctrines correspond with the natural dispositions, that the mind will be yet more apt to lose the proper balance of its affections, and to be carried into extremes. In the case of over-rigid maxims of virtue, such as the Stoical discipline was alledged to prescribe, the corrective from nature is both a sure and a safe one. From the history of mankind, it is apparent, that, wherever the powers or affections of nature have been strained, or her feelings violated, she has generally, although sometimes in an imperceptible manner, resumed her authority *. Notwithstanding a few fanatics in philosophy may have been, for a while, deaf to her voice, they were unable to persevere in their opposition to it, or to persuade others to disregard it. If some Stoics of inferior note were chargeable with an unnatural affectation of austerities, we do not find that any of the eminent men of their sect were accused of having this blemish in their character †.

Even

* Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.—Hor. Epist. 10. lib. 1.

† Cicero, in his oration *Pro Muraena*, says of Cato: In M. Catone, judices, haec bona, quae videmus divina, et egregia, ipsius scitote esse propria. Quae nonnunquam requirimus, ea sunt omnia non a natura, sed a magistro.

Even such of them, as, like Cato, were strict in their principles, and rather severe to themselves, were known to be placid and mild in their manners, and indulgent to others with whom they were conversant *. They proved, by their deportment, that rigid maxims of virtue, although adopted in speculation, ought, in practice, to be qualified. The extreme of any virtue, if not before apprehended, becomes, upon reflection, and a regard to circumstances, perceptible to a virtuous mind, and receives the proper correction. But this is not the case, where the moral rule of life is considered as less strict in itself, or where, from the propensities of nature, men are inclined to swerve from it. The limit between the virtue and the vice is, then, less attended to; and the mind, gradually losing sight of it, thinks not of curbing its favourite affections, until itself be subverted, and undone by their prevailing power.

Here we are arrived at the conclusion of our subject. The successions of the celebrated Grecian schools have been, in their order, brought into view; and the theories and reasoning of the philosophers, respecting the most important objects of the human understanding, have been traced. Their various speculations about the constitution and state of the world of beings, visible and invisible, and the disagreement of the ablest of them with one another, may well be considered as a proof, that the faculties

* The characters of other eminent Romans, who had their education from preceptors of the Stoical sect, are represented in the following passage: *Hujusmodi Scipio ille fuit, quem non poenitebit facere idem, quod tu: Habere eruditissimum hominem (Panaetium) et paene divinum domi; cujus oratione, et praeceptis, quamquam erant eadem ista, quae te delectant, tamen asperior non est factus, sed (ut accepi a senibus) lenissimus. Quis vero C. Laelio comior? quis jucundior, eodem ex studio isto? quis illo gravior, sapientior! Possum de L. Philippo de C. Gallo dicere haec eadem: Sed te domum jam deducam tuam, &c.—Cic. ibid.*

faculties of man are adapted to investigate the arduous subject, only in an imperfect and partial manner; and that it is not given to a creature of his condition to understand, thoroughly, *what the works of God are, from the beginning of them unto the end.* Hence metaphysical reasoning, with respect to them, has so often proved vain and chimerical; and the science itself, although called *the first philosophy*, cannot be prosecuted, but a certain length, without the discovery of its perplexities. Perfection of wisdom only belongs to God; and, therefore, said Aristotle, none but he can be a *perfect metaphysician*.

While the physical theorist testifies his absurd presumption, that, in a world planned by infinite wisdom, every line of its contrivance should fall within the level of his understanding; the Sceptic, on metaphysical ground, is a contrast to him, by scorning all human knowledge. He is discontented, and angry, with the human faculties, which he reckons of no sufficient extent for knowing any thing, or reasoning about it with certainty. How surprising, and intollerable, is it, says he, that, having reason, we should not understand what substances are in their essence, and how they differ from a collection of qualities? It is not even conceivable to us, in what manner our bodies are moved, at the will of our minds. Our apprehension of causes and effects, is, metaphysically, dark and ambiguous; and, when we pretend to distinguish them, we only substitute names for things. To conceive, that, as in all the creatures below us, the reach of our faculties may be, and are, wisely and properly, accommodated to our state of being, is a thought too plain, and obvious, to be entertained in the plodding mind of the Sceptic. Yet, surely, upon the supposition that any tribe of the inferior animals should attain a degree of reason beyond their natural instincts or sagacity, it may be understood what turbulence would be excited in the sublunary scale of beings.

It appears, that Providence has measured out the precious endowment, *knowledge*, sparingly, and with reserve, because of the abuse to which, by creatures of a certain constitution, it might be turned; and that the Pythagoreans held a just doctrine, when they said, that human advancements in it were to be preceded, or attended, with a suitable degree of purification from corporeal affections and passions. We are
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not permitted to rush into knowledge. Intuitive truths are few; and serve only as the basis of science, or the demonstrative proof. Progress in it requires the exercise of our rational faculties, by the comparison of our ideas; and, where that cannot be instituted between two of them, we must consider, whether, by calling in a third one, their similarity, or dissimilarity, their equality, or inequality, may not be rendered manifest. It is enough, that, by this rational act, we perceive that discoveries of truth may be made, and even in a lengthened series of them, which, in some sciences, appears to us surprising. It is evident, that the extent of our conceptions exceeds that of our knowledge; and that we have various ideas, which we cannot clearly contemplate. But, as ideas are the source of knowledge, it may well be presumed, that, imperfect as some of them are, they serve to open the mind to measures of it, unattainable in the body; and that many things, not now discoverable, will, in the channel of them, be hereafter understood. Human philosophy, although it teaches us not what substances are, enables us, from observing the very different qualities and operations of body and mind, to distinguish them as two natures of being, separately existent in the universe, and found, in our mixed constitution, to have, each of them, its peculiar office. The appointment of the soul to have dominion over the body, is manifest; and there can be no subversion of this order, without the destruction of the man. Equally apparent it is to the contemplative mind, that, over all the classes of being, there is an invisible ruler, and preserver, without whose agency, and allwise government, the material world could not subsist, nor the incorporeal one have the arrangement of the active powers competent to it. But, how shall theories of human invention explain what distributions of these powers are made to the various ranks of creatures, in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms; or how they are to be distinguished, by their efficiency, from one another; whether, in some of them, there may be modes of corporeal mechanism, and in others an immaterial principle, called *vitality*, yet not the same with soul or mind? These are questions, about the solution of which, if the curious and inquisitive have employed their studies, the result has only been a temporary amusement to themselves, and others of their taste, for delusive theory.

We have observed, with what admiration the circular motions of the heavenly bodies were contemplated by the most scientific geniuses in the Grecian philosophy: For such Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, may justly be accounted. The first, recognised in them the harmony of numbers; and the second, an eternity of one unvaried motion. The third considered their circumvolutions as an image of intellect in act, and returning uniformly into itself. That the celestial spheres were animated, and conducted in their motions, by intelligences of an order only inferior to the supreme, and eternal mover, was a doctrine common to them all. The question respecting the manner in which motion was communicated to bodies, whether of the celestial or sublunary kind *, has also been mentioned, as stated by Plato. That philosopher, however, did not pretend, like some of his followers, to dogmatise upon this doubtful point. Conceivable, he said, it might be, in three several ways. For, beside supposing that the action of the intelligences might ensue by incorporeity with the stars, after the manner of the human constitution, or by the interposition of some unknown medium, it is remarkable, that he thought that their volitions alone might be sufficient to accomplish the mysterious energy. Notwithstanding it was a general maxim in his theory, that intellect, or mind, did not, immediately, connect itself with body, but required the intervention of soul, and, therefore, he held forth a general one of the world, yet he did not specify the modifications of that soul, or deliver a doctrine about its particular distributions. In this, it must be owned, there was a reserve becoming a philosopher, attentive to the difficulties of the subject he treated, and not disposed to solve them, any how, for the sake of establishing a system †. He expressed, as has been observed, a distrust of the best human conceptions about the diversified operation of the *mundane* soul, in the heavens, and in the earth. The doctrine of various souls appeared a stumbling one to him, and inadmissible in physics. It was left, therefore, to his disciple Aristotle, to resolve the perplexing question, in the most specious manner he could. He rejected the Platonic soul of the world; while he understood, as little as his master, how a partition was to be made of

* Part 5. sect. 3. pag. 278.

† Vid. *ibid.* pag. 276.

of soul, mind, or intellect. Much, however, he thought was to be done, whether in physics, metaphysics, or logics, by making nice distinctions; and since, according to his doctrine, forms incorporeal constituted the natural elements, and all the transmutations of which they were susceptible, he considered it to be no exceptionable, but rather a just and necessary position, that there were several species of soul; which might be, chiefly, comprehended in those of the *vegetable*, the *animal*, and *intellectual* kind.

This distinction of the natures of beings in the world, was, indeed, no novelty, but had been, long before, made, not only by the philosophers, but by the vulgar of mankind. Yet it went not the length of determining, precisely, what was the characteristic difference of these natures, unless where it was palpably marked, as between the vegetable and the animal, and the rational and irrational creature, or the man and the brute. To go farther, was not easy for the Stagirite himself; who, as has been observed, did not hold, that every corporeal substance was animated; and, therefore, he hesitated whether to call the animal life a soul, or part of a soul. He asserted, that nature was not only a principle of motion, but of rest; so that matter, or body, might be found in a passive, and quiescent state, as well as in an active one. Some of his followers, however, did not adhere to this position; but maintained, that an immaterial principle, in various forms, moved and actuated all corporeal nature, and that no part of it could be reckoned to be at absolute rest, or without having, at least, a tendency to motion. This doctrine was that of Plato, afterwards methodised by those denominated his latter disciples; of whom Proclus, and Platinus, were the most celebrated. It is this theory, which some modern espousers of the Peripatetic philosophy, already taken notice of, would oppose to the Newtonian doctrine, about the motions of the planets around the sun; resolved, as it was, into the speculative principle of their *projection* and *gravitation*. As Newton himself assigned no physical cause of this complex motion, but considered it as a *law*, impressed upon these bodies by *divine* and omnipotent power; his physical philosophy has been, hitherto, generally understood to support, signally, the principles of theism; more especially as it displays the Creator's celestial works in a light

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more declarative to men of his almighty power, and unerring wisdom, than any other theory of them ever before unfolded; and its having this excellent tendency, the most sceptical have not presumed to dispute. That difficulties may be found in it, with respect to the cause of the cohesion of the particles of matter, and in conceiving by what means the planetary bodies should, at the same time, both gravitate to, and recede from, their centres, has been understood, and made the subject of physical controversy, at home and abroad. Upon account of the very excentric *elypsises*, in which the comets move, and the peculiarities observed in these bodies, objections, thought to be insuperable, have been started to Newton's theory, and recourse had to another suggested from observations on *electrical* bodies, and their attractive and repellent powers. This principle of physics is regarded by those conversant in the science of it, as what may be the foundation of a theory about the motions of the heavenly bodies, and other natural *phaenomena*, more *physically* just, and satisfactory, than any account of them that can be collected from Newton's *Principia*. If this theory should gain reputation, and, as its admirers presume, become the prevalent one, there will be more ground than is afforded from the Newtonian physics, for true and philosophic theists to take the alarm. But it will admit of hesitation, and doubt, whether they should rest their arguments upon explications of the ancient Peripatetic doctrine, that are, at least, controvertible, and exhibit a theory of soul, and mind, which, although allowed to be just and true in its general principle, that matter is the passive, and mind the only active substance in the world, and the original cause of all corporeal motion, yet presume to give a detail of the immaterial principle, and form divisions and arrangements of it into several distinct substances, of which human reason appears unqualified to take any proper or satisfactory cognisance.

To finish our conclusive remarks, it may be proper to look forward, and observe in what the competition amongst the several schools of Greece, for preferable fame, at length terminated. The result was, a declining the fetters of any particular system, and taking the liberty to borrow, out of the various theories, those tenets only, which were judged to be most agreeable to reason. Upon this ground arose the
sect

sect called *Eclectic*, from the selection its adherents made of their philosophic principles and opinions. To Potamon, a native of Alexandria, philosophy owed this reformation; which, although it confined the researches of truth to the discoveries made in the schools, was considerable, and advantageous. We know but little of Potamon's discipline, and have only some rules, said to be prescribed by him, about admissible tenets. It is not agreed, whether he appeared at Rome in the reign of Augustus, or in that of Tiberius Caesar; but his school soon rose to great reputation. Notwithstanding attachments to particular sects still obtained, the prevalence of his general doctrine appeared, from the free sentiments both of the poets and philosophers of that æra. The writings of Plutarch, and of the elder Pliny, testify how much, in their time, adherence to any sect was disregarded. The Roman Emperors, after Augustus, chose their instructors in philosophy, indifferently, out of all the celebrated schools. But a second birth of philosophy, although a weak and motely one, ensued in the famous school of Alexandria; which, by the favour and liberality of the Ptolemies, became an asylum to the learned, much more externally illustrious, by the munificent provisions made for them, than ever Athens had proved.

The bounties of the Ptolemies to the professors of philosophy, in their academy of *Isis* and *Serapis*, did not operate to the advancement of the sciences. Whether, after great efforts, such as the Grecian schools had made, the human genius is, naturally, thrown into a temporary languor, or else, that institutions for scientific proficiency are not, always, calculated to produce it, the professors in the Alexandrine school showed their genius to be of the retrograde kind, and defective of all invention. They studied only explications, and paraphrases, of the works of Plato, Aristotle, and other masters of the Grecian schools; and several of these labours were confined to grammatical and verbal criticisms. When more was attempted, the object was to bring about a *syncretism*, as it was called, of philosophy; or to reconcile the tenets of the most famous sects to one another. In this harmonising scheme, prejudices and partialities could not fail to operate; and it appears, from what is transmitted to us of the writings of *Numenius of Apamea*,

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of Ammonius Saccas, and Plotinus his disciple, together with those of Proclus of Lycia, and Porphyrie, and Jamblicus, into what a *farrago* of Egyptian, Pythagoric, Platonian, Aristotelian, and other incongruous doctrines, the Grecian philosophy was converted. In it, two opposite things were conjoined; the most subtile refinements of metaphysics, and the delusions of vulgar credulity and superstition. Plato's ideas were personified, and his triple world was represented as replenished with a multiplicity of Demons and Genii, good and bad. How to repel the influence of the latter, and hold a communication with the former, was the great object of their philosophic study and discipline. To attain this end, while the metaphysical geniuses, such as Proclus and Plotinus, dived deep into contemplations about the methods of purifying the human soul from the errors of the understanding, and the depravities of the heart; the less *spiritual*, and common professors of philosophy, resolved the work into the virtues of incantations, spells, and sorceries. In this manner did philosophy assume, for its supports and efficacy, all the apparatus of *magic*. Belief in *theurgy*, as it was called, became a delusion no less general, than that which had, for many ages, prevailed among mankind, in consequence of the implicit faith given to the responses of the oracles, and all the other impositions of the *priestly* auguries and divinations.

When the schools of ancient Greece, so famed for the exertions of natural reason, and philosophic study, thus showed *their latter end to be worse than their beginning*, it was high time that men should be called to recognise that supernatural revelation vouchsafed to them by the *father of their spirits*, and marvellously preserved in one nation of the earth. There, only, was to be found a religious institution, and *sanctuary*, in which the Supreme Being, the creator of the heavens and the earth, was represented by no sensible image, but his worshippers required to adore him, who was invisible, in a spiritual manner. When all other nations appeared to renounce this rational principle in their public worship, and, notwithstanding its approbation, by some of their wise men, to espouse many unbecoming, and detestible rites and practices, the Jewish sanctuary was kept unprofaned by such impieties. The sacred doctrine of a One Eternal, and Incorporeal Deity, was not only understood

stood among the *Rabbis*, or learned few of the nation, but inculcated upon all the worshippers of the God of Israel. Notwithstanding the revolt of the ten tribes from Judah, adherence to it distinguished that people, in all the countries where, in their public calamities, they were dispersed. It appeared to be the *testimony* which the Supreme Being was pleased to give of himself, in a manner more adapted to the instruction of the bulk of mankind, than any series of speculative reasoning could prove. It was such a divine revelation, as Socrates, and Plato, and the best of the ancient philosophers, acknowledged to be necessary for the reformation of the religious principles, and moral sentiments, of the human race. How much more was it attested to be a heavenly light, held out in the midst of general darkness, when considered as preparatory to the brighter day of the evangelical revelation? The supernaturally avouched mission, the character, deportment, and offices, of the *Messiah*, the *person* sent to reclaim the world by his doctrines, bore every requisite proof, that the Author of *Christianity* was, indeed, the *Logos*, or revealed wisdom of God; having a perfection and tendency in it, to that end, which never could be reached by human theories; and such as, from the import of its sublime and salutary truths, was calculated to overawe and reform the vicious, and instruct and comfort the pious and the good, in every state and condition of human life.

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The successions of the Grecian Philosophers, and their schools, have been traced, through this Work, in the order of time, except in the transposition of the Stoical Philosophy. There was, however, a fancied arrangement of them, which appears more arbitrary, than proper, that, in imitation of Diogenes Laertius's disposition of their lives, was generally embraced by the Schoolmen. It proceeds upon a supposed, or imagined connection of the general principles of some of the sects with others. The Table in the Appendix exhibits this arrangement.

APPENDIX.

TABLE of the Successions of the Schools; and of the Sects of the Philosophers.

The IONIC School, founded by
Thales Milefus, continued by
Anaximander,
Anaximenes,
Anaxagoras Clazomen,
Archelaus Athen.

The ITALIC School, founded by
Pythagoras Samius, continued by
Hippodamus Thurius,
Eutyphamus,
Hipparchus,
Archytas,
Theano, uxor Pythagorae, &c.

Precedently to the appearance of *Socrates*, arose the ELEATIC School, so called from
Zeno Eleates, but founded by

Xenophanes Colophonius, continued by
Parmenides,
Melissus,
Zeno Eleates.

Classed with them, the *Atomists*,
Leucippus,
Democritus Abderites,
Protagoras.

Ranged under them,
The Acataleptic, the Pyrrhonian, or
Sceptical sects; and, conjoined with
them, the school and sect of *Epicurus*.
Intervention of the smaller schools that
arose upon *Socrates*'s death; the *Eliac*,
Eretriac, and *Megaric*.

The two more durable sects of the same
origin,
The Cyrenaics and Cynics.

Of the First,

Aristippus, the founder, succeeded by
Arete, his daughter,
Aristippus, called Metrodidactus, his son,
and followed by
Theodorus Atheus,
Hegesias,
Anniceris.

These are placed under the head of the
Italic School.

Of the Second,

Antisthenes, the founder, succeeded by
Diogenes Sinopenfis,
Monimus Syracusanus,
Demetrius Cynicus,
Hipparchia,
Crates Thebanus, &c.

These placed under the head of the
Ionic, or Athenian School.

The

The School of ATHENS, instituted by Anaxagoras, or Archelaus, held by

Socrates; continued by
Plato, under the name of the *Academy*;
afterwards divided into the *Old*, the
Middle, and the *New*.

Old Academy, supported by

Speusippus,
Xenocrates Chalcedonius,
Ptolema Atheniensis,
Crates Athen.
Crantor Solensis.

Middle Academy, founded by

Arcefilaus, continued by
Lacydes Cyrenaeus,
Telecles Phocensis,
Erander,
Hegesianus Pergamenus.

New Academy, founded, if not by

Lacydes, by
Carneades Cyrenaeus, continued by
Clitomachus Carthaginiensis.

Beside the triple division of the *Academy*, above stated, there sprung from it, and from other Schools of Philosophy in Athens, the three most numerous and celebrated of all the Sects; that of the *Peripatetic*, *Stoic*, and *Epicurean*; each of them distinguished by a particular name, the *Lyceum*, the *Porch*, and the *Gardens*.

Successions in these Schools.

The *Lyceum*, or Peripatetic.

Aristotle the founder. His successors,
Theophrastus Etesius,
Strato Lampfacenus,
Demetrius Phaleraeus,
Critolaus Phaselites, &c.

The *Porch*, or Stoic,

Zeno Citticus the founder. His successors,
Cleanthes Assius,
Chrysippus,

Diogenes Babylonius,
Antipater,
Posidonius,
Panaetius, &c.

The *Gardens*, or Epicurean School.

Epicurus the founder. His successors,
Mus, fervus ejus,
Zeno Epicureus,
Hermachus,
Lucretius, &c.



THE END.

